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SUCCINCT and SEASONABLE

# DISCOURSE

OF THE

Occasions, Causes, Nature, Rise,  
Growth, and Remedies of

## MENTAL ERRORS.

Written some Months since ; and now  
made publick, both for the healing and pre-  
vention of the Sins and Calamities which have  
broken in this way upon the Churches of Christ,  
to the great scandal of Religion , hardening of  
the Wicked ; and obstruction of Reformation.

Whereunto are subjoined by way of *Appendix* :

- I. *Vindictiarum Vindex* : Being a Succinct, but Full Answer to  
Mr. Philip Cary's weak and impertinent Exceptions to  
my *Vindictiae Legis & Fœderis*.
- II. A *Synopsis* of Ancient and Modern *Antinomian Errors* :  
with Scriptural Arguments and Reasons against them.
- III. A *SERMON* compos'd for the preventing and heal-  
ing of Rents and Divisions in the Churches of Christ.

By JOHN FLAVELL, Preacher of the Gospel at  
*Dartmouth in Devon.*

With an EPISTLE by several Divines, Relating to  
Dr. CRISP's Works.

L O N D O N :

Printed by R. Roberts, for Tho. Cockerill, at the  
*Three-Leggs* in the *Poultry*, over-against the  
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**T**HE Reverend Author of the ensuing Treatises, having in them explained and defended several Gospel-Truths, unto which divers things in the Writings of the Reverend Dr. Crisp deceased, do seem very opposite; Whereas some of us who subscribed a Paper, the design whereof was only to testify, That we believed certain Writings of the Doctor's never before Published, were faithfully transcribed by his Son, the Publisher of them; which Paper is now, by the Bookseller, prefixed to the whole Volume, containing a large Preface, which we never saw till after the publication, together with all the Doctor's former Works that were published many years before; And are hereupon, by some weak People, misunderstood, as if by that Certificate, we intended an Approbation of all that is contained in that Volume. We declare, we had no such intention: As the Paper we subscribed hath no word in it that gives any such intimation: But are well pleased these later Writings

(a 3)

things are Publish'd ( in reference whereto  
We only certified our belief, which we fix-  
edly retain, of the Publisher's fidelity )  
as they contain many passages in them, that  
may in some measure remedy the hard and  
hurtful construction that many expressions  
were more liable to in the former ; whereof  
the Doctor seem'd apprehensive himself, when  
in the beginning of his Discourse, on Tit. 2.  
11, 12. he speaks thus : [ Beloved, I am  
jealous of you with an holy jealousy,  
1 Cor. 11. 2, 3. Left after the sweet  
wooing of you in Christ's Name, that  
you might be espoused unto him ; I  
say, I am jealous, and fear, lest as the  
Serpent beguiled Eve through his sub-  
tilty, namely, bewitching her to a pre-  
sumptuous, licentious adventuring on  
God's gentleness, while she tasted the  
forbidden Fruit ; so your minds should  
be corrupted from the simplicity that is  
in him, namely, by presuming too much  
upon him, and adventuring to continue  
in Sin, in hope that Grace may abound.  
For the preventing of which dangerous  
miscarriage, which hath been the dan-  
gerous lot of many Thousands, I  
thought good to step in with this Text,  
which I am persuaded will prove a rea-  
sonable warning to some at least. And  
this

this Pious caution of the author herein,  
lest he should be misunderstood, gives us  
some grounds to believe, that he intended  
them not in the more exceptionable sense.  
'Tis best, if any unwarlike Reader receive  
hurt, that he receive his healing also from  
the same hand; and whereas a Paper was  
Printed upon this occasion soon after the  
Publication of the Doctor's Works, We  
willingly adopt so much of it as is requisite  
to our present purpose, which is to this effect:

'Some who Subscribed this Certificate,  
'saw only the Paper it self, to which sub-  
'scription was desired; never having per-  
'used the Works of Dr. Crisp. The Cer-  
'tificate only concerned the Son, not the Fa-  
'ther; and certified only concerning the Son,  
'That they who should subscribe it, believed  
'him in this, to deal truly; that he was not  
'a Falsarius; that he would not say that was  
'his Father's, which was not so; a Paper  
'so sober, so modest, was (taken by it  
'self) scarce refusable by a Friend.

'The Son's Preface, some that sub-  
'scribed this Certificate, saw not, nor had  
'any notice, or the least imagination of its  
'Contents; otherwise the part of a Friend  
'had certainly been done, as well in advi-  
'sing against much of the Preface as in  
'subscribing the Certificate.

‘ For the Works of this Reverend Per-  
‘ son themselves, as it no way concern’d  
‘ the subscribing this Certificate, to know  
‘ what they were; so from the opinion that  
‘ went of the Author, among many good  
‘ Men, That he was a Learned, Pious,  
‘ Good Man, it was supposed they were like-  
‘ ly to have in them many good and useful  
‘ things; to which it was only needful to  
‘ think them his, not to think them per-  
‘ fect.

‘ We may in some respect judge of Books  
‘ as of Men, i.e. reckon, that though di-  
‘ vers very valuable Men, have had re-  
‘ markable failings; yet that upon the  
‘ whole, ’tis better they have lived and  
‘ been known in the World, than that they  
‘ should not have lived, or have lived ob-  
‘ scure.

‘ The truth is (which we have often con-  
‘ sidered) that though the great Doctrines  
‘ of Christian Religion do make a most co-  
‘ herent, comely Scheme, which every one  
‘ should labour to comprehend and digest  
‘ in his mind; yet when the Gospel first  
‘ becomes effectual for the changing mens  
‘ hearts, ’tis by God’s blessing this or that  
‘ passage which drops; the most discern not  
‘ the series and connection of Truths at first,  
‘ and too little afterwards.

‘ Upon

‘ Upon that view of Dr. Crisp’s Writings  
‘ we have had since the Publication, we find  
‘ there are many things said in them, with  
‘ that good savour, quickness, and spirit,  
‘ as to be very apt to make good impressions  
‘ upon mens hearts; and do judge, that  
‘ being greatly affected with the Grace of  
‘ God to Sinners himself, his Sermons did  
‘ thereupon run much in that strain. All  
‘ our minds are little, and incomprehensive;  
‘ we cannot receive the weight and impres-  
‘ sion of all necessary things at once, but  
‘ with some inequality; so that when the  
‘ Seal goes deeper in some part, ’tis the  
‘ shallower in some others.

‘ If some parts of Dr. Crisp’s Works be  
‘ more liable to exception, the danger of hurt  
‘ thereby seems in some measure obviated  
‘ in some other: As when he says, p. 46.  
‘ vol. 1. Sanctification of Life, is an in-  
‘ separable Companion with the Justifi-  
‘ cation of a Person by the Free-Grace of  
‘ Christ. And Vol. 4. p. 93. That in  
‘ respect of the Rules of Righteousness,  
‘ or the Matter of Obedience, we are  
‘ under the Law still, or else we are  
‘ Lawless, to live every Man as seems  
‘ good in his own eyes, which I know  
‘ no true Christian does so much as  
‘ think.

‘ In

*' In like manner whereas, Vol. 2.  
' Serm. 15. and perhaps elsewhere, the  
' Doctor seems to be against evidencing  
' our Justification and Union to Christ,  
' by our Sanctification and new Obedi-  
' ence ; we have the truth of God in this  
' matter plainly deliver'd by him. Vol. 4.  
' p. 36. when he teacheth, that our Obedi-  
' ence is a comfortable evidence of our  
' being in Christ ; and on that, as well as  
' on many accounts, necessary.*

*' The difference between him and other  
' good men, seems to lie not so much in the  
' things, which the one or other of them be-  
' lieve, as about their order and reference  
' to one another ; where, 'tis true, there  
' may be very material difference : but we  
' reckon, That notwithstanding what is more  
' controversible in these Writings, there  
' are much more material things, wherein  
' they cannot but agree, and would have come  
' much nearer each other, even in these  
' things, if they did take some words  
' or terms which come into use on the one  
' or the other hand, in the same sense ;  
' but when one uses a word in one sense, ano-  
' ther uses the same word (or understands it,  
' being used) in quite another sense, here  
' seems a vast disagreement, which proves  
' at length to be verbal only, and really none*

‘ at all : As let by Condition, be meant a de-  
‘ serving Cause, (in which case ’tis well  
‘ known Civillians are not wont to take it)  
‘ and the one side would never use it, con-  
‘ cerning any good Act that can be done by  
‘ us, or good Habit that is wrought in us, in  
‘ order to our present acceptance with God,  
‘ or final Salvation. Let be meant by it,  
‘ somewhat, that by the constitution of the  
‘ Gospel-Covenant, and in the nature of  
‘ the thing is requisite to our present and  
‘ eternal well-being, without the least notion  
‘ of desert, but utmost abhorrence of any  
‘ such notion in this case, and the other  
‘ side would as little refuse it. But what  
‘ need is there for contending at all about  
‘ a Law-term, about the proper or pre-  
‘ sent use whereof, there is so little agreement  
‘ between them it seems best to serve, and  
‘ them it offends. Let it go, and they will  
‘ well enough understand one another. Again,  
‘ Let Justification be taken for that which is  
‘ compleat, entire, and full, as it results at  
‘ last from all its Causes, and Concurrents,  
‘ and on the one hand it would never be denied  
‘ Christ’s righteousness justifies us at the Bar  
‘ of God in the Day of Judgment, as the  
‘ only deserving cause; or affirmed that our  
‘ Faith, Repentance, Sincerity, do justi-  
‘ fie us there, as any cause at all. Let Ju-  
‘ stification



‘stification be meant only of being justified in  
‘this or that particular respect; As for in-  
‘stance, against this particular Accusation,  
‘of never having been a Believer: and the  
‘honest mistaken Prefacer would never have  
‘said, O horrid! upon its being said, Christ’s  
‘Righteousness doth not justify us in this case:  
‘For he very well knows Christ’s Righteous-  
‘ness will justify no man that never was a  
‘Believer; but that which must immediately  
‘justify him against this particular Accu-  
‘sation, must be proving, that he did sincerely  
‘believe, which shews his interest in Christ’s  
‘Righteousness, which then is the only deser-  
‘ving cause of his full entire Justification.  
‘There is an Expression in Vol. i. p. 46.  
‘That Salvation is not the end of any good  
‘work we do, which is like that of another;  
‘we are to act from Life, not for Life.  
‘Neither of which are to be rigidly taken,  
‘as ’t is likely they were never meant in the  
‘strict sense. For the former, this Reve-  
‘rent Author gives us himself the handle,  
‘for a gentle interpretation, in what he pre-  
‘sently subjoyns, where he makes the end of  
‘our good works to be the manifestation  
‘of our Obedience and Subjection; the set-  
‘ting forth the praise of the glory of the  
‘Grace of God; which seems to imply, that  
‘he meant the foregoing negation in a com-  
‘parative,

‘parative, not in an absolute sense; un-  
‘derstanding the glory of God to be more  
‘principal; and so that by end, he meant  
‘the very ultimate end: so for the other ’tis  
‘likely it was meant, that we should not act  
‘or work for life only, without aiming and  
‘endeavouring, that we might come to work  
‘from life also.

‘For it is not with any tolerable charity  
‘supposable, that one would deliberately  
‘say the one or the other of these in the  
‘rigid sense of the words; or that he would  
‘not, upon consideration, presently unsay it,  
‘being calmly reasoned with. For it were  
‘in effect to abandon Humane Nature,  
‘and to sin against a very Fundamental Law  
‘of our Creation, not to intend our own feli-  
‘city; it were to make our first and most deep-  
‘ly Fundamental Duty, in one great essen-  
‘tial branch of it, our sin, viz. To take the  
‘Lord for our God: For to take him for  
‘our God most essentially includes our  
‘taking him for our supream good; which  
‘we all know, is included in the notion of the  
‘last end; it were to make it unlawful to  
‘strive against all sin, and particularly a-  
‘gainst sinful aversion from God; wherein  
‘lies the very death of the Soul, or the sum  
‘of its misery; or to strive after perfect  
‘conformity to God in holiness, and the full  
‘fruition

'fruition of him, wherein its final blessed-  
'ness doth principally consist.

'It were to teach us to violate the great  
'Precepts of the Gospel; Repent, that  
'your sins may be blotted out. Strive to  
'enter in at the strait Gate. --- Work  
'out your salvation with fear and trem-  
'bling. To obliterate the Paterns and  
'Precedents set before us in the Gospel.  
'We have believed in Jesus Christ, that  
'we might be justified. --- I beat down  
'my body, lest I should be a castaway---  
'That thou mayest save thy self, and  
'them that hear thee.

'It were to suppose one bound to do more  
'for the salvation of others, than our own  
'salvation. We are required to save others  
'with fear, plucking them out of the fire.  
'Nay, we were not (by this rule, strictly  
'understood) so much as to pray for our own  
'salvation; (which is a doing of somewhat)  
'when no doubt, we are to pray for the suc-  
'cess of the Gospel, to this purpose, on be-  
'half of other men.

'Twere to make all the threatnings of E-  
'ternal Death, and promises of Eternal  
'Life, we find in the Gospel of our Blessed  
'Lord, useless, as motives to shun the one,  
'and obtain the other: For they can be mo-  
'tives no way but as the escaping of the for-  
'mer,

‘mer, and the attainment of the other have  
‘with us the places and consideration of an  
‘end.

‘It makes what is mentioned in the Scrip-  
‘ture, as the Character and commendation  
‘of the most eminent Saints; a fault, as of  
‘Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, &c. That  
‘they sought the better and Heavenly  
‘Countrey; and declared plainly that  
‘they did so: which necessarily implies their  
‘making it their end.

‘But let none be so harsh as to think of a-  
‘ny good man, that he intended any thing of  
‘all this; if every passage that falls from  
‘us be stretch’d and tortured with utmost  
‘severity, we shall find little to do besides  
‘accusing others, and defending our selves  
‘as long as we live.

A Spirit of meekness and love, will do  
more to our Common Peace, than all the  
Disputations in the World.

Upon the whole, We are so well assured of  
the peaceful healing temper of the present  
Author of these Treatises, That we are per-  
suaded he designed such a course of mana-  
ging the Controversies wherein he hath con-  
cerned himself, as not on the one hand to  
injure the memory of the Dead; and on the  
other, to prevent hurt or danger to the Li-  
ving.

Nor

*Nor do we say thus much of him, as if he sought, or did need any Letters of Recommendation from us; but as counting this Testimony to Truth, and this expression of respect to him, a Debt; to the spontaneous payment whereof, nothing more was requisite besides such a fair occasion as the Providence of God hath now laid before us, inviting us thereunto.*

John Howe,	}	John Turner,
Vin. Alsop,		Rich. Bures,
Nath. Mather,		Tho. Powel.
Increase Mather,		

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AN  
EPISTLE  
TO THE  
READER.

*Candid Reader,*

**C**ensure not this Treatise of ERRORS, as an Error in my Prudentials, in sending it forth at such an improper time as this. I should never spontaneously have awakened sleeping Controversies, after God's severe castigation of his people for them, and in the most proper and hopeful season for their Redintegration.

And beside what I have formerly said, I think fit here to add, That if the attack had been general, and not so immediately and particularly upon that *Post* or *Quarter* I was set to defend, I should with *Elihu* have modestly waited till some abler and more skilful hand had  
(b) under-

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

undertaken the defence of this Cause.

If ever I felt a temptation to envy the happiness of my Brethren, it hath been whilst I saw them quietly feeding their Flocks, and my self forced to spend some part of my precious and profitable time (devoted to the same service) in combating with unquiet and erring Brethren: But I see I must not be my own chuser. Notwithstanding, I hope, and am in some measure persuaded, That publick benefit will redound to the Church from this irksome Labour of mine. And that this strife will spread no further, but the *Malady* be cured by an *Antidote* growing in the very place where it began: And that the *Christian Camp* will not take a general *Alarm* from such a single *Duel*.

The Book now in thy hands consisteth of Four parts, viz. 1. A general Discourse of *the Causes and Cures of Errors*, very necessary at all times (especially at this time) for the reduction and establishment of seduced and staggering Christians; and nothing of that nature having occurred to my observation among the manifold Polemical Tracts that are extant, I thought it might be of some use to the Churches of Christ in such a vertigenous Age as we live in; and the blessing of the Lord go forth

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

forth with it for benefit and establishment.

2. Next, thou hast here the Controversies moved by my Antagonist, *first* about the *Mosaick Law* complexly taken, which he boldly pronounces to be an *Adam's Covenant* of works. And *secondly*, about *God's Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17.* which he also makes the same with that God made with *Adam* in *Paradise*; and affirms Circumcision (expressly called a Seal of the Righteousness of Faith) to be the Seal of the said Covenant of Works first made with *Adam*.

3. Finding my Adversary in the pursuit of his design, running into many *Antinomian delirations*, to the reproach and damage of the Cause he contends for; I thought it necessary to take the principal Errors of *Antinomianism* into examination, especially at such a time as this, when they seem to spring afresh, to the hazard of God's Truth, and the Churches Peace; wherein I have dealt with becoming modesty and plainness, if haply I might be any way instrumental in my plain and home way of Argumentation, to detect the falsity and dangerous nature of those notions which some good men have vent-



*An Epistle to the Reader.*

ed; and preserve the sounder part of the Church from so dangerous a contagion.

4. In the next place I think it necessary to advertise the Reader, That whereas in my first *Appendix* under that head of the *Conditionality* of the *New Covenant*, I have asserted Faith to be the Condition of it, and do acknowledg, *p. 246.* that the word *Condition* is variously used among *Jurists*; yet I do not use it in any sense, which implies or insinuates, that there is any such condition in the *New Covenant*, as that in *Adam's Covenant* was, consisting in perfect, personal, and perpetual obedience; or any thing in its own nature meritorious of the benefits promised, or capable to be performed by us in our own strength; but plainly, that it be an act of ours (tho' done in God's strength) which must be necessarily done before we can be actually justified or saved; and so there is found in it the true suspending nature of a condition; which is the thing I contend for, when I affirm, Faith is the condition of the *New Covenant*.

How many senses soever may be given of this word *Condition*, this is the determinate sense in which I use it throughout this Controversy. And whosoever denies the suspending Nature of Faith, with respect

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

respect to actual Justification, pleads (according to my understanding) for the actual Justification of Infidels. And, thus I find a Condition defined by *Navar. Johan. Baptist. Petrus de Perus. &c.* *Conditio est Suspendio alicujus dispositionis tantisper dum aliquid futurum fiat.* And again, *Conditio est quidam futurus eventus, in quem dispositio suspenditur.*

Once more, My Reader possibly may be stumbled at my calling Faith sometimes the *Instrument*, and sometimes the *Condition* of our Justification, when there is so great a Controversy depending among Learned Men, with respect to the use of both those terms. I therefore desire the Reader to take notice, That I *div*e not into that Controversy here, much less presume to *determine* it; but finding both those Notions equally opposed by our *Antinomians*, who reject our actual Justification by Faith either way, and allow to Faith no other use in our actual Justification, but only to manifest to us what was done from Eternity; I do therefore use both those terms, *viz.* the *Conditionality*, and *Instrumentality* of Faith, with respect unto our Justification, and shew in what sense those terms are useful in this Controversy, and

### *An Epistle to the Reader:*

are accommodate enough to the design and purpose for which I use them, how repugnant soever they are in that particular, wherein the Learned contend about the Use and Application of them.

To be plain, when I say, Faith justifies us as an *Organ* or *Instrument*; my only meaning is, that it receives, or apprehends the Righteousness of Christ, by which we are justified; and so speaking to the *Quomodo*, or manner of our Justification, I say with the general Suffrage of Divines, we are justified instrumentally by Faith.

But in our Controversy with the *Antinomians*, where another different Question is moved about the *Quando*, or time of our actual Justification; there I affirm, that we are actually justified at the time of our believing, and not before; and this being the Act upon which our Justification is suspended, I call Faith the *Condition* of our Justification.

This, I desire, may be observed, lest in my use of both those terms, my Reader should think, either that I am not aware of the Controversy depending about those terms; or, that I do herein manifest the vacillancy of my Judgment, as if I leaned sometime to one side, and  
some-

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

sometime to another. I speak not here, *ad idem*, as they do in that Contest; but when I call it a *Condition* of Justification, my meaning is, that no Man is justified until he believe. And when I call it an *Instrument*, my meaning is, that it is the Righteousness of Christ apprehended by Faith, which doth justify us when we believe. And so I find the Generality of our Divines calling Faith sometimes a Condition, and sometimes an Instrument of our Justification, as here I do.

And if there be any Expression my Reader shall meet with, which is less accurate, and may be capable of another sense: I crave that Candor from him, that he interpret it according to this my declared Intention.

5. *Lastly*, I have added to the former, a short, plain, practical Sermon, to promote the Peace and Unity of the Churches of Christ, and prevent their Relapse into past Follies.

In all the Parts of this Discourse, I have sincerely aimed at the Purity and Peace of the Church of God; and he greatly mistakes, that takes me for a Man of Contention. 'Tis true, I am here contending with my Brethren, but pure necessity brought me in; an unpleasing

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

irksomeness hath attended me through it, and an hearty desire, and serious motion for Peace amongst all the professed Members of Christ, shall close and finish it. Let all Litigations of this nature (at least, in this Critical Juncture) be suspended by common Consent, since they waste our time, hinder our Communion, imbitter our Spirits, impoverish practical Godliness, grieve the Spirit of God, and good Men, make sport for our Common Enemies, who warm their own Fingers at the Fire of our Contentions; and place more Trust in our dividing Lusts, than they do in their own feeble Arguments, or castrated Penal Laws, to effect our Ruin.

It is my grief (the Lord knows) to see the delightful Communion the Saints once enjoyed, whilst they walked together under the same Ordinances of God, now dissolved in such a sad and scandalous Degree, by the Impressions of erroneous Opinions, made both upon their Heads and Hearts. I do therefore heartily joyn with *Budæus* in his pious Wish, \* That God would give his People as much Constancy in retaining the Truths they once received, as they had Joy and Comfort at their first Reception of them. I must

\* *Utinam  
tam conser-  
vis manibus  
compertam  
comprehen-  
samque ve-  
ritatem se-  
mel retine-  
re possimus  
quam pro-  
tinus agni-  
tam festi-  
vis oculis  
bilares ex-  
osculamur.*

in

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

in this occasion declare my just Jealousy, that the Non-improvement of our Baptistical Covenant unto the great and solemn Ends thereof in our Mortification, Vivification, and regular Communion with the Church of Christ, into which Society we were matriculated by it; is at this day punished upon Professors in those fiery Heats, and fierce Oppositions, unto which God seemeth to have penally delivered us at this day.

For my own part, it is my fixed Resolution to provoke no good man if I can help it. But if their own intemperate Zeal shall provoke them, in pursuit of their Errors, to destroy the very nature of God's Covenant of Grace with *Abraham* and his Seed, and I have a plain call (as here I had) at once to defend God's Truths and my Peoples Souls against them, I will earnestly contend in the Cause of Truth, whilst I can move my Tongue, or make use of the Pen of the Scribe.

Reader, I shall appeal to thee, if thou be wise and impartial, Whether any man that understands the Covenant of God renewed with *Abraham* (which is the grand Charter, by which we and our Children hold and enjoy the most invaluable Privileges) can endure to see it dissolved and  
utterly

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

utterly destroyed, by making it an abolished *Adam's* Covenant of Works ; and stand by as an unconcerned Spectator, when challenged and provoked to speak in defence thereof?

Is there any thing found in God's Covenant with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. to make it an abolished Covenant of Works, which doth not as injuriously bear upon, and strike at the very life of the Covenant of Grace in the last and best Edition of it, under which the whole Church of God now stands? What is that thing (I would fain know) in God's Covenant with *Abraham*? Is it the Promissory part of it, *I will be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee*, Gen. 17. 7? God forbid: for the essential and sweetest part of the New Covenant is contained in that Promise, *Jer.* 31. 33. *Heb.* 8. 10. Yet thou wilt find my *Antagonist* here forced to assert, God may become a Peoples God in a special manner by virtue of the abolished Covenant of Works; and such he makes this Covenant to be.

Or does the *Restipulation Abraham* and his were here required to make unto God, even *to walk before him, and be perfect*; doth this make it an *Adam's* Covenant of Works? Surely no. For as God there requires

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

quires perfection of *Abraham*, so Christ requires the same perfection of all New-covenant Fœderates now, *Matth. 5. 48. Be ye perfect, as your Father which is in Heaven is perfect*; which is altogether as much as ever God required of *Abraham* and his, in *Gen. 17. 1.* Take Perfection in what sense you will, either for a *positive* Perfection, consisting in truth and sincerity; or a *comparative* Perfection, consisting in the growth and more eminent degrees of Grace; or a *superlative* Perfection, which all New-covenant Fœderates strive after here, *Phil. 3. 12, 13.* and shall certainly attain in Heaven, *Heb. 12. 23.* In this also the Covenant with *Abraham*, and with us, are truly and substantially one and the same.

Or doth my mistaken Friend imagine, that God required this Perfection of *Abraham*, and his, as in the First Covenant he required it from *Adam*, and all his? *viz.* to be performed and maintained in his own strength, under penalty of the Curse; but now though Christ command perfection, yet what duty lies in any command, answerable strength for it lies in the Promise? Very well, and was it not so then? compare the Command, *Deuter. 10. 16. Circumcise there-*



*An Epistle to the Reader.*

*therefore the fore-skins of your hearts, with the answerable gracious Promise to enable them so to do, Deut. 30. 6. The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart, and the heart of thy Seed, to love the Lord thy God.*

Or lastly, Did Circumcision, the Sign and Seal added to *Abraham's* Covenant, make it an *Adam's* Covenant of Works? That's equally impossible with the former; for no man, but such a daring Man as I am concerned with, will dare to say, that a *Seal of the righteousness of Faith* (as Circumcision was, *Rom. 4. 11.*) can make the Covenant, to which it is affixed (and which I have shewn in all the other substantial parts, the very same with that we are now under) to become an *Adam's* Covenant of Works.

These things I have here superadded, to leave as little as is possible behind me to be an occasion of further trouble and contention. Let all strife therefore in so plain a case be ended: Contentious Spirits are not the most excellent Spirits among Christians. Fire (and so Contention) is more apt to catch in low-built thatcht Cottages, than in high-built Castles, and Princely Palaces: the higher we go, still the more peace. The highest Region is most sedate and calm. Stars have the strongest

*An Epistle to the Reader.*

strongest influence, when in conjunction. Angels(tho legions) have no wars among them; and as willingly go down, as up the Ladder, without justling each other. And the Most High God is the God of Peace; let us also be the Children of Peace. And I do assure the Persons with whom I contend, That whilst they hold the head, and are tender of the Churches Peace, I can live in charity with them here, and hope to live in glory with them hereafter.

*I remain, Reader, thine and  
the Truth's Friend,*

John Flavell.

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THE

1. Ministry of Health, Department of Health, 1960, p. 1.

*Handwritten signature*

John. J. Smith

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# III

THE  
CONTENTS  
OF THE  
Causes and Cures, &c.

- T**HE Etymology and definition of the  
word Error, Introd. p. 2, 3.  
The difference between Heresy and Error,  
Introd. p. 4.  
Twenty general Observations, Disc. p. 7.  
Obs. 1. Truth is the object and natural food  
of the Understanding, p. 7. Explain'd  
and confirm'd, p. 8.  
Obs. 2. Several sorts of Knowledge, a-  
mongst which the supernatural knowledge  
of saving Truths revealed in the Scrip-  
tures, is the best, 9.  
Obs. 3. Unto the attainment of Divine  
Knowledge out of the Scripture, some  
things are naturally, yet less principally  
requisite in the subject; and something  
absolutely and principally necessary, 11.  
As the irradiation of the mind by the Spirit  
of God; the benefits of which, 12.  
Obs. 4. Among the manifold impediments  
to the obtaining of true Knowledge, and  
settling the mind in the truth and faith  
of the Gospel, these three are of special  
conside-

## The Contents.

- consideration; viz. Ignorance, Curiosity  
and Error, p. 13.
- Obs. 5. Error is binding upon the Conscience as well as Truth; and altogether as much, and sometimes more influential upon the Affections and Passions than Truth is, 14.
- Obs. 6. 'Tis exceeding difficult to get out Error when once it is imbib'd, and hath rooted it self by an open profession, 15.
- Obs. 7. Men are not so circumspect and jealous of the Corruptions of their Minds by Errors, as they are of their Bodies in times of Contagion; or of their Lives with respect to gross Immoralities, 17.
- Obs. 8. 'Tis a great Judgment of God to be given up to an Erroneous Mind, 19.
- Obs. 9. 'Tis a pernicious Evil to advance a mere Opinion into the place or seat of an Article of Faith; and to lay as great stress upon it, as they ought to do upon the most clear and fundamental Point, 21.
- Obs. 10. Error being conscious to it self of its own weakness, and the strong assaults that will be made upon it, evermore labours to defend and secure it self under the wings of Antiquity, Reason, Scripture, and high pretensions to Reformation and Piety, 23.
- Obs. 11. God in all Ages in his tender care for

## The Contents.

for his Churches and Truths, hath still qualified and excited his Servants for the defence of his precious Truths, against the Errors and Heresies that have successively assaulted them, p. 25.

Obs. 12. The want of a modest suspicion, and just reflection, gives both confidence and growth to Erroneous Opinions, 27.

Obs. 13. There is a remarkable involution or concatenation of Errors, one linking in, and drawing another after it, 29.

Obs. 14. Errors abound most, and spring fastest in the times of the Churches Peace, Liberty, and outward Prosperity under Indulgent Governors, 31.

Obs. 15. Errors in the tender bud, and first spring of them, are comparatively shy and modest, to what they prove afterwards; when they have spread and rooted themselves into the minds of multitudes, and think it time to set up and jostle for themselves in the World, 33.

Obs. 16. Nothing gives more countenance and increase to Error, than a weak and feeble defence of the Truth against it, 35.

Obs. 17. Errors of Judgment are not cured by compulsion and external force, but by rational conviction, and proper spiritual remedies, 36.

Obs. 18. Erroneous Doctrines producing Divisions

## The Contents.

*visions and fierce Contentions amongst Christians, prove a fatal Stumbling-block to the World; fix their Prejudices, and obstruct their conversion to Christ, p. 38.*

*Obs. 19. How specious and taking soever the pretences of Error be, and how long soever they maintain themselves in esteem among men, they are sure to end in the loss and shame of their Authors and Abettors at last,* 40.

*Obs. 20. If ever Errors be cured, and the Peace and Unity of the Church establisht, men must be convinced of, and acquainted with the occasions and causes both within and without themselves, from whence their Errors do proceed; and must both know and apply the proper rules and remedies for the prevention or cure of them,* 42.

*Divine Permission an occasion of Error, 44.  
Which must be prevented by avoiding,*

- 1. A want of love to the Truth,* 45.
- 2. Pride and wantonness of the mind,* 46.
- 3. The neglect of Prayer,* *ibid.*

*Culpable Causes of Errors in men are,*

- 1. A wrangling humor at the pretended obscurity of the Scriptures, p. 47.*

*Cod's wisdom manifested in leaving some difficulties in the Scriptures,* 49.

*For the prevention of this, cause these Rules following*

## The Contents.

*following to be heeded and practis'd, viz.*

- R. 1. To expound all obscure Texts of  
Scripture according to the analogy and  
proportion of Faith, p. 50.
- R. 2. Not to wrest Scripture from its ge-  
neral and common sense in favour of our  
preconceived Opinions, 51.
- R. 3. When we meet with a difficult place  
of Scripture, to search the Context  
thoroughly, 52.
- R. 4. Let one Testament freely cast its  
light upon the other, the Old on the New,  
and the New on the Old, ibid.
- R. 5. Observe the sense which the current of  
Expositors do agree in, and which natu-  
rally agrees with the scope of the place,

53

Cause 2. The abuse of the Liberty given  
by Christ to all his People to read the  
Scriptures, and to judge of the sense of  
them by a private judgment of Discre-  
tion, ibid.

Remedy of it, is to observe the limits which  
Christ hath set to this Liberty; which  
Limitations are,

- 1. A liberty to read and study, but not pub-  
lickly to expound and preach the Word, 57.
- 2. Christians of different Abilities ought to  
study some parts of Scripture rather than  
others,

59.

( c 2 )

Cause 3.



## The Contents.

- Cause 3. *Slothfulness in a due and serious search of the Scripture*, 61. *How to find the institution of the Sabbath in the Scripture*, 64. *How to find the institution of the Baptism of Infants there*, 65. *Several Considerations to cure this slothfulness*, 67.  
*Viz. A serious search of the Scriptures is our duty*, ibid.  
*Na action of ours that is not agreeable to God's will, is acceptable to him*, 68.  
*This is the path in which the wisest and best of men have gone before us*, 69.  
*Every discovery of the Will of God obtain'd in this method, is highly pleasant*, 70.  
*Confirms our Faith*, 71.  
*An impartial search into the Will of God will be a testimony of our Integrity and Sincerity*, ibid.  
 Cause 4. *Instability of judgment, and unsettledness of mind about the truth of the Gospel*, 72.  
*This is the effect sometimes of Hypocrisie, sometimes of weakness*, 74.  
*To prevent which, some Rules*, 76. *viz.*  
 R. 1. *To get a real inward implantation into Christ*, ibid.  
 R. 2. *To labour for an experimental Taste of the Truths professed*, p. 77.  
R. 3. To

## The Contents.

- R. 3. *To study hard, and pray earnestly,* p. 77:  
 R. 4. *To be sensible of the benefit of a good establishment, and the evil and danger of a wavering mind,* p. 78.  
 Cause 5. *Eagerness to snatch at any Doctrine or Opinion that promiseth ease to an Anxious Conscience,* 79.  
*For the cure of which some Queries propounded, viz.*  
 Qu. 1. *Whether a good trouble be not better than a false Peace?* 82.  
 Qu. 2. *Whether Troubles so laid asleep, will not revive again with a double force?* 83.  
 Q. 3. *Whether the Saints in Scripture, that have been under terrors, have not found peace by those very methods which the Principles that quiet you, exclude?* 84.  
 Cause 6. *An easy Credulity.* 85. *The Remedies against this.*  
 1. *The consideration, that it is beneath a man,* 88.  
 2. *That the priviledge of trying all things, is of too great a value to be thus slighted,* 89.  
 3. *Observe the Practices and Lives of those men whose Opinions you are so ready to imbrace,* 90.  
 Cause 7. *A vain Curiosity,* 90. *Remedies.*  
 1. *A due consideration of the mischiefs that have entered into the World by this,* 92.  
 2. *God hath not left his people to seek their Salvation among curious, but solid and plainly revealed Truths,* 94.  
 3. *'Tis a dangerous snare of Satan,* *ibid.*  
 Cause 8. *Pride and Arrogancy of Humane Reason,* 95. *Remedies.*  
 1. *'Tis the Will of God, that Ratiocination should submit to Revelation, and Reason to Faith,* 98.  
 2. *A sense of the weakness and corruption of Natural Reason,* 99.

## The Contents.

3. Consider the manifold mischiefs flowing from the pride of Reason.

Cause 9. Ignorant Zeal, 101. Defensatives.

1. A Reflection upon the mischiefs occasioned by it in all Places and Ages, 104.

2. A consideration how hurtful it may prove to your own Soul, 106.

3. How prejudicial it hath been to Human Society, 107.

4. That Opinion is to be suspected which comes in by the Affections, 108.

Cause 10. Impulsive of spreading Errors, Satan, 110. Rules for Cure.

1. Pray for a sound Conversion, 113.

2. Acquaint your selves with the Devices of Satan, *ibid.*

3. Resign your Souls to the conduct of Christ and his Spirit, 114.

4. Live in the practice of the truths and duties God hath revealed already, 115.

Cause 11. Instrumental, the false Teacher, *ibid.* Remedies.

1. Pray for strength of Grace, and solidity of Judgment, and use all means to obtain it, 119.

2. Acquaint your selves with the Artifices of such as these, 121. Such as are, their endeavours to blast the reputation of faithful Teachers, *ibid.* the mixing their Errors among solid Truths, 122.

Cause 12. The methods used by False Teachers to draw men from the truth; among which the first is, their representing the Abuses of the Ordinances of God in such a manner as to scare tender Consciences from the use of them, 124. Remedies.

1. Nothing so great and sacred in Religion, but what hath been vilely corrupted and abused, 127.

2. 'Tis

## The Contents.

- (c 4)

## The Contents.

- hearts of those Ministers who have travelled in pain for them,* 150, 151.
- Cause 16.** *Another Artifice of False Teachers, is, to press their Profelytes to declare speedily for them and their Opinions, 152. Remedies. Consider,*
1. *That hasty ingagements in disputable matters, have cost many Souls dear,* 155.
  2. *Weighty Actions require answerable deliberations,* *ibid.*
  3. *The only season wherein men have to consider, is, before their Affections are too far engaged,* 156.
  4. *Consult with pious Ministers, and trust not to your own Judgment,* 157.
  5. *Suspect that Opinion that will not allow you a due time for consideration, 158. Consecratories from the whole,* *ibid.*
  1. *The usefulness and necessity of a standing Ministry,* *ibid.*
  2. *How little peace the Church must expect, till a greater light be poured out upon it,* 159.
  3. *What a mercy it is to be kept sound in Judgment, and stedfast in the ways of Christ,* 161.
  4. *We may discover one cause of the great decay of serious Piety in this Age,* 162.
  5. *One Reason of the frequent Persecutions God exercised his Church with,* 163.
  6. *We may learn the duty and necessity of mutual Charity and forbearance,* 164.

## The Contents of *Vindiciarum Vindex*, or the First Appendix.

<b>T</b> HE whole of the Answer reduced under three heads,	p. 175.
Two things premised,	176.
	Head 1,

## The Contents.

Head 1. *Mr. Cary hath not been able to free his Thesis from the horrid absurdity charged upon it, viz. That Moses, and the whole People of God, were under a Covenant of Works, and a Covenant of Grace at the same time, 179. From whence follows,*

*Absurd. 1. That all their lives they were in the mid-way between life and death, and after death in the mid-way betwixt Heaven and Hell, 180.*

*Mr. Cary's First Reply, 184. Answer'd, 185.*

*Mr. Cary's Second Reply, 187. Answer'd, ibid.*

*The Ten Commandments complexly taken, including the Ceremonial Law, were added as an Appendix to the promise, 192.*

*Mr. Cary's Answer to it consider'd, 194.*

*A Promise of pardon in the Sinai Dispensation, to penitent Sinners, 198, 199.*

*The several Arguments that are left standing in their full force against Mr. Cary, 200, 201, 202, 203.*

*The Law given at Sinai, wrote of the chief Privileges which the Jews had, 203.*

*His Argument, that the Law is not of faith, consider'd and answer'd, 206.*

*Dr. Edw. Reynolds's Opinion about the Law, 207, 213.*

*The Position about Abraham's Covenant, being a Covenant of Grace, defended, 213. The first Argument for the proof of it, 214. Mr. C's Reply answer'd, 215. His distinction of A Covenant of Works, and The Covenant of Works, overthrown, 217, 218.*

*The second Argument for the proof of it, 220.*

*Mr. C's Reply answer'd, 221.*

*Third Argument, 222. Mr. C's Reply answer'd, 223.*

*The*

## The Contents.

- The Covenants not made with Abraham in Gen. 17.*  
225, 228.
- Circumcision did not oblige all men, on whom it passed,  
to keep the whole Law of Moses for Righteousness,*  
230.
- Fourth Argument, 231. Circumcision in its direct  
end, taught them the corruption of Nature by sin,  
and the mortification of sin by the Spirit, 231.*
- Mr. C's Reply answer'd, 232. His Arguments to  
prove the Sinai Covenant a Covenant of Works,  
likewise answered, 233. Cutting off, in Gen. 17.  
14. not the same with the death threatned to A-  
dam, ibid.*
- How faith reckon'd to Abraham for Righteousness  
while he was in Uncircumcision, 234. How the  
Sinai Covenant is a Bondage Covenant, 236.  
Dr. Crisp's Judgment, 237. Of the Condition-  
ality of the New Covenant, 242. The Question  
stated, 243. What the word Condition signifies,  
245. Antecedent and consequent Conditions, 246.*
- No condition of the Covenant with respect to its first  
sanction with Christ, 247. but hath an antecedent  
Condition with respect to the application of its bene-  
fits unto men, 248. Which is Faith, as organi-  
cally consider'd, 249. The Opinions of Orthodox  
Divines in this Question cited, 250. That the  
Covenant is Conditional, proved from M. C's own  
Concessions, 256.*
- Christ hath not perform'd the Condition for us, 262.  
Tho he works Faith in us by his Spirit, 263.*
- A Condition does not imply merit, 264.*
- Arguments to prove the conditionality of the Covenant;  
266,*
- First Argument, 267. Second Argument, 268.  
Third Argument, ibid. Fourth Argument, 270.  
Fifth Argument, 272. Mr. Cary's*

## The Contents.

*Mr. Cary's Reply to it, 273. The Answer, 274.  
The Reasons of my Faith and Practice in the Baptism  
of Infants, 278. in several Theses,*

*Thes. 1. God hath dealt with his Church and People  
in the way of a Covenant, and will do so to the end  
of the World, 281.*

*Thes. 2. After the Cessation of the first Covenant, as  
a Covenant of Life, God hath published a Second  
Covenant of Grace by Jesus Christ, 283. When  
the Covenant of Grace took place, 284.*

*Thes. 3. Tho the primordial Light of this Covenant  
of Grace was comparatively weak and obscure;  
yet God from the first publication of it, hath been  
heightning its Privileges, and amplifying its  
Glory in the after Editions; and will more and  
more illustrate it to the end of the World, 287.*

*Thes. 4. It is past all doubt, that the Infant-seed of  
Abraham, under the second Edition of the Cove-  
nant of Grace, were taken into God's gracious Co-  
venant, had the Seal of that Covenant applied to  
them, and were thereby added to the visible Church,  
289.*

*Thes. 5. That Rom. 11. 17. is a clear proof, that  
believing Parents, and their Seed, are ingrafted  
into the room of the Jews, who were broken off,  
290, 291.*

*Thes. 6. Suitably hereunto, when a Christian Church  
was constituted, the Children of such believing Pa-  
rents were declared federally holy, 1 Cor. 7. 14.  
That the Promise which was seal'd to them by Cir-  
cumcision, is now seal'd by Baptism, Act. 2. 39.  
292.*

*Thes. 7. The change of the Token and Seal of the Cove-  
nant, from Circumcision to Baptism, will by no means  
infer the change of the Covenants, especially when the  
latter*



## The Contents.

*latter comes into the place of, and serves to the same use and end with the former, Col. 2. 11. p. 295.*  
*A Postscript to Mr. Cary,* 297.  
*Some absurdities chargeable upon him,* 300.

### The Contents of the Second Appendix: Or, The Rise and Growth of *Antinomianism*.

**T**He rise of Antinomianism, Ap. 2. 308.  
*The Abuse of Free-grace chargeable upon good, as well as wicked Men,* 311.  
*By what means some good Men may be drawn to such dangerous Opinions,* 313, 314, 315, 316.  
*A Catalogue of Ten Antinomian errors, 318. which are all contrary to the current of the Scriptures,* 323. *and to the experience of Saints,* 325.  
 Error 1. *That Justification is an eternal Act of God, and so perfectly abolishes Sin in our Persons, that we are as clear from Sin as Christ himself,* 328.  
*Sense of the Orthodox about it,* 328, 329.  
*This proved to be irrational, 332. Unscriptural, 335. Injurious to Jesus Christ, 338. and injurious to the Souls of Men,* 340.  
 Error 2. *That Justification by Faith, is only the manifestation to us of what was really and actually done before. Reasons against it,* 341, ad 350.  
 Error 3. *That Men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or question, whether they believe or no. Reasons against it,* 351 ad 354.  
 Error 4. *That Believers are not bound to confess their Sins, or pray for the Pardon of them. From whence will follow either, 1. That there is no Sin in Believers,* 355. *Or 2. That Sin in them is inconsiderable,* 357. *Or 3. That it is not the Will of God they should confess and mourn over them; which is refused,* 358.  
 Error

## The Contents.

Error 5. That God sees no Sin in Believers,	360.
This proved to be injurious to God's Omniscience,	361.
To be inconsistent with his providential Dispensations,	362.
To have no foundation in Scripture,	363.
To clash with their other Principles,	365.
Error 6. That God is not angry with the Elect for their Sins,	365.
How the Antinomians led in to this Error,	366.
Three Concessions about God's Corrections of his People,	368.
God lays his Corrections on his People,	369.
And for their Sins,	371.
These Corrections consistent with his satisfi'd Justice,	373.
Error 7. That by God's laying our Iniquities upon Christ, he became as sinful as we, and we as completely righteous as he. That not only the Punishment of Sin, but the Sin it self was laid upon Christ,	375, 376.
Four Concessions,	377, 378.
Sin simply considered, did not become the Sin of Christ,	379.
We are not as completely Righteous as Christ,	384.
Error 8. Neither Believers own Sins, nor the Sins of others, can do them hurt. Nor must they do any Duty for their own Good, Salvation, or eternal Reward,	389.
That Believers sins do them no hurt, refuted,	ibid.
Sin consider'd formally,	392.
Effectively,	392.
Reductively,	393.
That Believers ought to do no Duty for their own good, or with an Eye to their reward, refuted,	395.
Self-ends, either Corrupt or Spiritual,	397.
This Error injurious to the Souls of Men,	ibid.
Error 9. The new Covenant is not made with us, but Christ for us; The Covenant is wholly a promise without any Condition on our parts; That Faith,	Re-

## The Contents.

*latter comes into the place of, and serves to the same use and end with the former, Col. 2. 11. p. 295.*  
*A Postscript to Mr. Cary,* 297.  
*Some absurdities chargeable upon him,* 300.

### The Contents of the Second Appendix: Or, The Rise and Growth of *Antinomianism*.

**T**He rise of Antinomianism, Ap. 2. 308.  
*The Abuse of Free-grace chargeable upon good, as well as wicked Men,* 311.  
*By what means some good Men may be drawn to such dangerous Opinions,* 313, 314, 315, 316.  
*A Catalogue of Ten Antinomian errors, 318. which are all contrary to the current of the Scriptures,* 323. *and to the experience of Saints,* 325.  
 Error 1. *That Justification is an eternal Act of God, and so perfectly abolishes Sin in our Persons, that we are as clear from Sin as Christ himself,* 328.  
*Sense of the Orthodox about it,* 328, 329.  
*This proved to be irrational, 332. Unscriptural, 335. Injurious to Jesus Christ, 338. and injurious to the Souls of Men,* 340.  
 Error 2. *That Justification by Faith, is only the manifestation to us of what was really and actually done before. Reasons against it,* 341, ad 350.  
 Error 3. *That Men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or question, whether they believe or no. Reasons against it,* 351 ad 354.  
 Error 4. *That Believers are not bound to confess their Sins, or pray for the Pardon of them. From whence will follow either, 1. That there is no Sin in Believers,* 355. *Or 2. That Sin in them is inconsiderable,* 357. *Or 3. That it is not the Will of God they should confess and mourn over them; which is refused,* 358.  
 Error

## The Contents.

Error 5. That God sees no Sin in Believers,	360.
This proved to be injurious to God's Omniscience,	361.
To be inconsistent with his providential Dispensations,	362.
To have no foundation in Scripture,	363.
To clash with their other Principles,	365.
Error 6. That God is not angry with the Elect for their Sins,	365.
How the Antinomians led in to this Error,	366.
Three Concessions about God's Corrections of his People,	368.
God lays his Corrections on his People,	369.
And for their Sins,	371.
These Corrections consistent with his satisfi'd Justice,	373.
Error 7. That by God's laying our Iniquities upon Christ, he became as sinful as we, and we as completely righteous as he. That not only the Punishment of Sin, but the Sin it self was laid upon Christ,	375, 376.
Four Concessions,	377, 378.
Sin simply considered, did not become the Sin of Christ,	379.
We are not as completely Righteous as Christ,	384.
Error 8. Neither Believers own Sins, nor the Sins of others, can do them hurt. Nor must they do any Duty for their own Good, Salvation, or eternal Reward,	389.
That Believers sins do them no hurt, refuted,	ibid.
Sin consider'd formally,	392.
Effectively,	392.
Reductively,	393.
That Believers ought to do no Duty for their own good, or with an Eye to their reward, refuted,	395.
Self-ends, either Corrupt or Spiritual,	397.
This Error injurious to the Souls of Men,	ibid.
Error 9. The new Covenant is not made with us, but Christ for us; The Covenant is wholly a promise without any Condition on our parts; That Faith,	Re-

## The Contents.

<i>Repentance, Obedience, are Conditions on Christ's</i>	
<i>part, and that he performs them for us,</i>	398.
<i>Refuted,</i>	399.
<i>The Covenant of Redemption, and of Grace, distinguish-</i>	
<i>ed,</i>	ibid.
<i>Christ did not believe and repent for us,</i>	401.
<i>Error 10. They deny Sanctification to be the evidence</i>	
<i>of Justification, 404. Refuted,</i>	ibid.

## The Contents of the Sermon about Gospel-Unity.

<b>T</b> <i>He Text, 1 Cor. 1. 10. open'd, p. 410. A</i>	
<i>Duty, and the Arguments inforcing it,</i>	410, 11.
<i>Doctrine, Unity among Believers is a necessary Mercy,</i>	
<i>and indispensable Duty,</i>	414.
<i>What Unity among Believers is, explained,</i>	415.
<i>Consists in a Mystical Union with the Head, and a</i>	
<i>Moral Union among themselves, ad.</i>	419.
<i>This Unity desirable as it conduces, (1.) To the</i>	
<i>Glory of God, 419. (2.) To the Comfort and</i>	
<i>Benefit of Souls, 421. (3.) With respect to the</i>	
<i>World,</i>	422.
<i>Use. By way of Exhortation to Unity,</i>	424.
<i>Motive 1. 425. Mot. 2. 427. Mot. 3. 428.</i>	
<i>Mot. 4. 432. Mot. 5. 433. Mot. 6. 436.</i>	
<i>Use 2. Direction,</i>	436.
<i>Direction 1. 437. Direction 2.</i>	440.
<i>Ministers to mind their proper work,</i>	ibid.
<i>The People to mind theirs,</i>	441.
<i>Direction 3. 442. Direct. 5. 444. Direct. 6. 445.</i>	
<i>Direct. 7. 446. Direct. 8.</i>	447.

## A Table of the Scriptures Vindicated and Explained.

*C C. stands for the Causes and Cures of Mental Errors;  
Ap. 1. for the 1st Appendix ; Ap. 2. for the 2d  
Appendix ; Ser. for the Sermon of Gospel-Unity.*

<b>G</b> enesis, cap. 17. v. 7,	cap. 4. 9, 10. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 234
8. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 233.	—v. 11. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 220.
—v. 9, 10. C. C. p. 65.	—v. 13. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 234.
<i>Ap.</i> 1. 225.	cap. 5. 17, 20. <i>Ap.</i> 1.
Leviticus, cap. 26. v. 40,	p. 189. cap. 6. 1, 2.
41. C. C. p. 70. <i>Ap.</i> 1.	<i>Ap.</i> 2. p. 309. cap. 8.
p. 198.	28. <i>Ap.</i> 2. p. 389.
Numbers, cap. 23. v. 21.	—v. 33. <i>Ap.</i> 2. p. 336.
<i>Ap.</i> 2. p. 363.	cap. 9. 4. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 203.
Job 12. 11. C. C. p. 7.	cap. 10. 2. C. C. p. 102.
Psalms 58. 3. C. C. p. 3.	cap. 11. 16. C. C. p. 65.
89. v. 30, 31. <i>Ap.</i> 2.	—v. 17. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 290.
p. 374.	cap. 12. 2. C. C. p. 67.
Canticles 2. 6, 7. <i>Serm.</i>	—v. 6. C. C. p. 50.
p. 423.	cap. 15. 5. <i>Serm.</i> p. 419.
Isaiah 9. 16. C. C. p. 136.	1 Cor. 3. 12, 13. C. C.
Jer. 15. 16. C. C. p. 70.	p. 41. cap. 7. 14. C. C.
50. v. 20. <i>Ap.</i> 2. p. 364.	p. 51. 65.
Mal. 3. 16. C. C. p. 107.	2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. <i>Ap.</i> 1.
Matt. 15. 14. C. C. p. 88.	p. 197.
Joh. 17. 23. <i>Serm.</i> p. 422.	Galatians 1. 6. C. C.
Acts 2. 38. C. C. p. 65.	p. 154. cap. 3. 1. C. C.
—v. 46, 47. <i>Serm.</i> p. 421.	p. 118. —v. 12. <i>Ap.</i> 1.
cap. 7. 38. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 199.	p. 205. —v. 17. <i>Ap.</i> 1.
cap. 15. 10. <i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 236.	p. 176, 229. cap. 4. 17.
cap. 16. 2, 3. <i>Ap.</i> 1.	C. C. p. 102. cap. 5. 1.
p. 226, 229.	<i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 236. —v. 23.
Rom 1. 26. C. C. p. 19.	<i>Ap.</i> 1. p. 230. —v. 4. <i>Ap.</i>
	1. p. 284. Ephesi-

## *A Table of the Scriptures, &c.*

Ephesians 4. 14. C. C.	James 4. 8. C. C.
p. 118, 72, 74.	p. 74.
Philippians 2. 12. <i>Serm.</i>	2 Peter 1. 12. C. C.
p. 424.	p. 77. cap. 2. 1. C. C.
Colossians 2. 6, 7. C. C.	p. 18, 34. --v. 3. C. C.
p. 76. --v. 10, 11. C. C.	p. 118. cap. 3. 16. C. C.
p. 66. cap. 3. 10. C. C.	p. 47, 48. p. 51. p. 135.
p. 8.	1 John 2. 13. C. C.
1 Thessalonians 4. 11.	p. 59. cap. 3. 7. <i>Ap.</i> 2.
<i>Serm.</i> p. 440.	p. 385.
2 Timothy 4. 3. C. C.	Jude v. 4. <i>Ap.</i> 2. p. 3 10.
p. 90.	v. 13. C. C. p. 3. 73.
Hebrews 5. 13, 14. C. C.	v. 16. C. C. p. 46.
p. 59.	

### G O R R I G E N D A.

**P**Age 10. l. 23. for *you*, r. *your*; p. 18. l. 23. for *their*, r. *there*; and l. 24. for *as*, r. *a*; p. 23. in the Margent, r. *tenetur*; p. 37. l. 23. r. *diffent in judgment*; p. 51. l. 19. r. *σεβασμι*; p. 54. l. 22. for *full liberty*, r. *fullness*; p. 62. l. 19. r. *sparsum*; p. 72. l. penult, r. *wait*; p. 80. in the Marg. for *assailed*, r. *absolved*; p. 89. l. 7. for *cary*, r. *carry*; p. 120. l. 4. add *wait*; p. 155. l. 4. r. *preventives*; p. 167. l. 19. r. *temerity*; p. 249. dele *as it is*, and add in its place, *in this sense*.

### A D V E R T I S E M E N T.

**T**Here is lately Printed a Book, Intituled, *A Demonstration of the first Principles of the Protestant Applications of the Apocalyps; together with the Consent of the Ancients, concerning the fourth Beast in the 7th of Daniel, and the Beast in the Revelations: By Drue Cressener, D. D.* Printed for *Tho. Cockerill*.

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A

Blow at the Root:

OR, THE

CAUSES and CURES

OF

Mental Errors.

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*The* INTRODUCTION.



FINDING by sad  
 Experience what I be-  
 fore justly feared, that  
*Errors* would be apt to  
 spring up with Liberty  
 (though the restraint of  
 just Liberty, being a  
 practical Error in Rulers, can never be  
 the cure of *Mental Errors* in the Sub-  
 jects;) I judged it necessary at this  
 Season to give a Succinct account of the  
 Rise, Causes, and Remedies of several  
A Mistakes



## The Introduction.

Mistakes and Errors, under which even the Reformed Churches among us, as well as others, do groan at this Day.

I will not stay my Reader long upon the Etymology and Derivations of the Word. We all know that Etymologies are no Definitions: Yet because they cast some light upon the Nature of the thing we enquire after, it will not be lost labour to observe that this word *ERROR* derives it self from three Roots in the *Hebrew* Language.

חטא  
 Chatta, a  
 Scopo a-  
 berravit.
 

 ( 1. ) The First word Primitively signifies to deviate or decline from the true Scope or path, as Unskilful Marks-men, or Ignorant and Inadvertent Travellers use to do. The least variation or turning aside from the true Rule and Line, tho it be but an hairs breadth, presently becomes an Error. We read, *Judg.* 20. 16. of 700. *Benjamites*, who could every one sling stones at an hairs breadth, and not miss, חטא ירא Heb. and not err. This by a *Metaphor* is applied to the Mind or Judgment of man; and denotes the warpings thereof from the Straight, Perfect, Divine Law or Rule, and is usually Translated by the word *Sin*.

( 2. ) It is derived from another word also, which signifies to wander in variable

ble and uncertain motions: You find it in the Title of the 7<sup>th</sup>. Psalm, *Shiggaion* of David, a wandering Song, or a Song of variable Notes and Tunes, higher and lower, sharper and flatter. In both the former Derivations it seems to note simple Error through meer Weakness and Ignorance. But then

שגה

Shaga.

( 3. ) In its Derivation from a third Root, it signifies not only to Err, but to cause others to Err also; and so signifies a Seducer, or one that is active in leading others into a wrong way; and is applied in that sense to the Prophets in Israel, who seduced the People, Ezek. 13. 10. The Greek Verb *πλανάω* takes in both these senses, both to go astray, and when put Transitiuely, to lead or cause others to go astray with us. Hence is the word *πλανήτης*, Planets or wandering Stars; the title given by the Apostle Jude ver. 13. to the false Teachers and Seducers of his time.

טגה

Tagna. in Hiph.

An Error then is any departure or deviation in our Opinions or Judgments from the perfect Rule of the Divine Law: And to this all men by nature are not only liable, but inclinable. Indeed man by Nature can do nothing else but Err, Psal. 58. 3. *he goeth astray as soon as*

*The Introduction.*

born; makes not one true step till renewed by Grace, and many false ones after his Renovation. The Life of the Holiest man is a *Book* with many *Errata's*; but the whole *Edition* of a wicked man's Life is but one continued Error; he that thinks he cannot Err, manifestly Errs in so thinking. The *Pope's* supposed and pretended *Infallibility* hath made him the great deceiver of the World. A good man may Err, but is willing to know his Error, and will not obstinately maintain it, when he once plainly discerns it.

Error and Heresy among other things differ in this; Heresy is accompanied with pertinacy; and therefore the Heretick is *ἀναισθητός*, self-condemned; his own Conscience condemns him, whilst men labour in vain to convince him. He doth not formally and in terms Condemn himself, but he doth so equivalently, whilst he continues to own and maintain Doctrines and Opinions which he finds himself unable to defend against the evidence of Truth. Humane frailty may lead a man into the first, but Devilish Pride fixes him in the last.

The word of God which is our rule, must therefore be the only Test and Touchstone to try and discover Errors;  
for

## The Introduction.

5

for *Regula est index sui & obliqui.* 'Tis not enough to convince a man of Error, that his Judgment differs from other mens; you must bring it to the Word, and try how it agrees or disagrees therewith; else he that charges another with Error, may be found in as great or greater an Error himself. None are more disposed easily to receive and tenaciously to defend Errors, than those who are the *Antesignani*, Heads or Leaders of Erroneous Sects, especially after they have fought in defence of bad Causes, and deeply engaged their Reputation.

The following Discourse justly entitles it self, A B L O W A T T H E R O O T: And though you will here find the Roots of many Errors laid bare and open; which comparatively are of far different degrees of Danger and Malignity; which I here mention together, many of them springing from the same Root: Yet I am far from censuring them alike; nor would I have any that are concerned in lesser Errors be exasperated, because their lesser Mistakes are mentioned with greater and more pernicious ones; this Candor I not only intreat, but justly challenge from my Reader.

And because there are many general

and very useful *Observations* about Errors, which will not so conveniently come under the Laws of that Method which governs the main part of this Discourse, viz. the *C A U S E S* and *C U R E S* of *Error*: I have therefore sorted them by themselves, and premised them to the following Part in *Twenty Observations* next ensuing.

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*Twenty general Observations, about the rise and increase of the Errors of the times.*

*First Observation.*

**T**Ruth is the proper Object, the natural and pleasant food of the Understanding, *Job 12. 11. Doth not the ear (that is, the understanding by the ear) try words, as the mouth tasteth meat?* Knowledge is the assimilation of the Understanding to the truths received by it. Nothing is more natural to man, than a desire to know: Knowledge never cloyes the Mind, as food doth the natural Appetite; but as the one increaseth, the other is proportionably sharpened and provoked. The Minds of all (that are not wholly immers'd in Sensuality) spend their Strength in the laborious search and pursuit of Truth. Sometimes climbing up from the Effects to the Causes, and then descending again from the Causes to the Effects; and all to discover Truth. Fervent Prayer, sedulous Study, fixed Meditations, are the labours of inquisitive Souls after Truth. All the Objections

and Counter-arguments the mind meets in its way, are but the pauses and hesitations of a bivious Soul, not able to determine whether Truth lies upon this side, or upon that.

Answerable to the sharpness of the Minds appetite, is the fine edge of Pleasure and Delight it feels in the discovery and acquisition of Truth. When it hath Rack'd and Tortured it self upon knotty *Problems*, and at last discovered the Truth it sought for ; with what joy doth the Soul dilate it self, and run ( as it were with open arms ) to clasp and welcome it ?

The Understanding of man at first was perspicacious and clear, all Truths lay obvious in their comely order and ravishing beauty before it : *God made man upright, Eccl. 7. 29.* this rectitude of his mind consisted in Light and Knowledg, as appears by the prescribed method of his Recovery, *Col. 3. 10. Renewed in knowledg, after the Image of him that created him.* Truth in the Mind, or the Minds union with Truth, being part of the Divine Image in man, discovers to us the Sin and Mischief of Error, which is a defacing ( so far as it prevails ) of the Image of God.

No

## *Causes and Cures of Mental Errors.*

9

No sooner was man created, but by the exercise of knowledg he soon discovered God's Image in him; and by his Ambition after more, lost what he had. So that now there is an haziness or cloud spread over Truth by Ignorance and Error, the sad effects of the Fall.

### *Second Observation.*

Of Knowledg there are divers sorts and kinds; some is *Humane*, and some *Divine*; some *Speculative*, and some *Practical*; some *Ingrasted*, as the Notions of *Morality*, and some *Acquired* by painful search and Study: But of all knowledg none like that Divine and Supernatural knowledg of saving truths revealed by Christ in the Scriptures; from whence ariseth the different degrees both of the Sinfulness and danger of *Errors*; those Errors being always the worst, which are committed against the most important Truths revealed in the Gospel.

These Truths lye infolded either in the plain words, or evident and necessary consequences from the words of the Holy Scriptures; Scripture-Consequences are of great use for the refutation of Errors;



rors ; it was by a Scripture-consequence, that Christ successfully proved the *Resurrection* against the *Sadduces*, *Matth. 22.* The *Arrians* and other *Hereticks* rejected consequential proofs, and required the express words of Scripture only, hoping that way to defend and secure their Errors, against the arguments and assaults of the *Orthodox*.

Some think that reason and natural light is abundantly sufficient for the direction of life ; but certainly nothing is more necessary to us for that end, than the written Word ; for though the remains of natural light have their place and use, in directing us about natural and earthly things ; yet they are utterly insufficient to guide us in spiritual and heavenly things, *1 Cor. 2. 14.* *The natural man receiveth not the things of God, &c.* *Eph. 5. 8.* *Once were ye darkness, ὡν ἦ φῶς οὐκ ἔμελλεν, now are ye light in the Lord,* i. e. by a beam of heavenly light shining from the Spirit of Christ, through the written Word, into you minds or understandings.

'Tis the written Word which shines upon the path of our Duty, *Psal. 119. 105.* the Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament* do jointly make the Solid Foundation of a Christian's Faith. Hence  
*Eph.*

## *Causes and Cures of Mental Errors.*

11

*Eph. 2. 20.* we are said to be built upon the Foundation of the *Apostles* and *Prophets*. We are bound therefore to honour *Old Testament* Scriptures as well as *New*, they being part of the Divine Canon; and must not scruple to admit them as sufficient and authentick proofs, for the confirmation of Truths, and refutation of Errors. Christ referr'd the people to them, *Joh. 5. 39.* and *Paul* Preached and Disputed from them, *Acts 26. 22.*

### Third Observation.

*Unto the Attainment of Divine Knowledg out of the Scriptures, some things are naturally, yet less principally requisite in the Subject; and something absolutely and principally necessary.*

The natural qualifications desirable in the Subject, are clearness of Apprehension, solidity of Judgment, and fidelity of Retention. These are desirable requisites to make the Understanding susceptible of knowledg; but the irradiation of the mind by the Spirit of God, is principally necessary, *Joh. 16. 13. He shall guide you into all truth:* The clearest and most comfortable light he giveth to men, is in the way of Sanctification, called the teachings of the Anointing, *1 John 2. 27.*  
When

When this spiritual sanctifying light shines upon a mind, naturally enriched and qualified with the three forementioned requisites, that Mind excels others in the riches of knowledg. And yet the teachings of the Spirit in the way of Sanctification, do very much supply and recompence the defects and weakneses of the forementioned qualifications. Whence two things are highly remarkable:

1. That men of great abilities of nature, clear apprehensions in natural things, strong Judgments, and tenacious memories, do not only frequently fall into gross Errors and damnable *Heresies* themselves; but become *Heresiarchs*, or Heads of erroneous Factions, drawing multitudes into the same sin and misery with themselves; as *Arrius*, *Socinus*, *Pelagius*, *Bellarmin*, and multitudes of others have done.

And secondly, It is no less remarkable, that men of weaker parts, but Babes in comparison, through the Sanctification and direction of the Spirit, for which they have humbly waited at his feet in Prayer, have not only been directed and guided by him into the Truth, but so confirm'd and fixed therein, that they have been kept sound in their Judgments in times

times of abounding Errors, and firm in their adherence to it in days of fiercest Persecution. How men of excellent natural parts have been blinded, and men of weak natural parts illuminated; see 1 Cor. 1. 26, 27. Matth. 11. 25.

Fourth Observation.

*Among the manifold impediments to the obtaining of true Knowledge, and settling the mind in the truth and faith of the Gospel, these Three are of special remark and consideration, viz. Ignorance, Curiosity, and Error.*

*Ignorance* flights it, or despairs of attaining it. Truth falls into contempt among the ignorant, from sluggishness and apprehension of the difficulties that lye in the way to it, Prov. 24. 7. *Wisdom is too high for a fool.* *Curiosity* runs beside or beyond it. This Pride and Wantonness of the mind puffs it up with a vain conceit, that it is not only able to penetrate the deepest Mysteries revealed in the Scripture, but even unrevealed secrets also, Col. 2. 18. *intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind.* But *Error* militates directly against it, contradicts and opposeth Truth, especially

especially when an Error is maintained by pride against inward convictions, or means of better information. 'Tis bad to maintain an Error for want of light ; but abundantly worse to maintain it against light. This is such an affront to the Spirit of God, as he usually punishes with Penal Ignorance, and gives them up to a spirit of Error.

#### Fifth Observation.

*Error is binding upon the Conscience, as well as Truth ; and altogether as much and sometimes more influential upon the Affections and Passions, as Truth is.*

For it presents not it self to the Soul in its own name and nature, as *Error* ; but in the name and dress of *Truth* ; and under that notion binds the Conscience, and vigorously influences the passions and affections ; and then being more indulgent to lust than Truth is, it is for that so much the more embraced and hugg'd by the deceived soul, *Acts* 22. 4, 5. The heat that Error puts the soul into, differs from Religious Zeal, as a *Feverish* doth from a *Natural* heat, which is not indeed so benign and agreeable, but much more fervent and scorching. A mind under the  
power

power of Error, is restless and impatient to propagate its Errors to others, and these heats prey upon, and eat up the vital Spirits and Powers of Religion.

Sixth Observation.

*'Tis exceeding difficult to get out Error, when once it is imbib'd, and hath rooted it self by an open profession.*

Errors, like some sorts of Weeds, having once seeded in a Field or Garden, 'tis scarce possible to subdue and destroy them, especially if they be hereditary Errors, or have grown up with us from our youth; *à teneris assuescere multum est*, saith *Seneca*; 'tis a great advantage to Truth or Error, to have an early and long possession of the mind. The *Pharisees* held many erroneous opinions about the *Law*, as appears by their corruptive *Commentaries* upon it, refuted by *Christ*, *Matth. 5.* but did he root them out of their heads and hearts thereby? No, no; they sooner rid him out of the world. The *Sadducees* held a most dangerous Error about the *Resurrection*; *Christ* disputed with them to the admiration of others; and proved it clearly against them; and yet we find the Error remaining

ing long after Christ's Death, 2 *Tim.* 2. 18. The *Apostles* themselves had their minds tinctured with this Error, That Christ should be outwardly great and magnificent in the world, and raise his Followers to great Honours and Preferments amongst men : Christ plainly told them it was their Mistake and Error ; for the Son of man came not to be ministred unto, but to minister ; yet this did not rid their minds of the Error ; it stuck fast in them, even till his Ascension to Heaven. Oh how hard is it to clear the heart of a good man once leaven'd with Error ! and much more hard to separate

\* I am it from a wicked man \*.

*persuaded*

(saith Mr. Gurnal) some men take more pains to furnish themselves with Arguments to defend some Error they have taken up, than they do for the most saving Truths in the Bible. Austin said, when he was a Manichean, Non Tu eras, sed Error meuserat Deus meus ; Thou O Lord, wert not, but my Error was my God. Gurnal's Christian Armour, part 2. page 36.

Some have chose rather to die, than to part with their darling Errors, and Soul-damning Heresies. I have read (saith Mr. Bridges) of a great *Atheist*, that was burnt at *Paris* for blaspheming Christ, held fast his Atheistical Opinions till he came to the very stake ; boasted to the *Priests* and *Fryars* that followed him, how

how much more confidently he went to sacrifice his life in the strength of reason, under which he suffered, than Christ himself did; but when he began to feel Torments indeed, then he roared and raged to the purpose. *Vidi ego hominem*, saith the *Author*; in his Life, he was Loose; in his Imprisonments, Sullen; and at his Death, Mad with the Horrors of Conscience.

Some indeed have recovered the soundness of their Judgments, after deep corruptions by dangerous Errors. *Austin* was a *Manichee*, and fully recovered from it. So have many more; and yet multitudes hold them fast even to death, and nothing but the Fire can reveal their work, and discover what is Gold, and what is Straw and Stubble.

### Seventh Observation.

It deserves a Remark, *That men are not so circumspect and jealous of the corruption of their minds by Errors, as they are of their bodies in times of Contagion; or of their lives with respect to gross immoralities.*

Spiritual dangers affect us less than corporeal; and intellectual evils less than moral. Whether this be the effect of *Hypocrisis*,



*crisis*, the Errors of the mind being more secret and invisible than those of the Conversation, God only knows, man cannot positively determine.

Or whether it be the effect of *Ignorance*, that men think there is less sin and danger in the one than in the other ; not considering that an *Apoplexy* seizing the Head, is every way as mortal, as a *Sword* piercing the Body : And that a *Vertigo* will as much unfit a man for service, as an *Ague* or *Feaver* : The Apostle in 2 Pet. 2. 1. calls them αἱρέσεις ἀπωλείας, damnable Heresies, or Heresies of Destruction. An Error in the mind may be as damning and destructive to the Soul, as an Error of Immorality or Profaneness in the Life.

Or whether it may come to pass from some remains of fear and tenderness in the Conscience, which forbids men to reduce their erroneous Principles into Practice ; theſe relying under many confident Errors in the mind | aſſ ſecret Jealouſie, which we call *formido oppoſiti*, which will not ſuffer them to act to the full height of their profeſſed opinions. *Auſtin* gives this Character even of *Pelagius* himſelf, *Retract. lib. 2. cap. 33. Nomen Pelagii non ſine laude aliqua poſui, quia vita ejus a multis*

*multis predicabatur* : I have not mentioned (*saieth he*) the name of that man, without some praise, because his life was famed by many. And of *Swinkfeldius* it is said, *Caput regulatum illi defuit, cor bonum non defuit* : His Heart was much more regular than his Head. Yet this falls out but rarely in the world ; for loose Principles naturally run into loose Practices ; and the Errors of the Head into the Immoralities of Life.

Eighth Observation.

*It is a great Judgment of God, to be given over to an erroneous mind.*

For the Understanding being the leading Faculty, as that guides, the other Powers and Affections of the Soul follow, as *Horses* in a *Teem* follow the *Fore-horse*. Now how sad and dangerous a thing is this, for *Satan* to ride the *Fore-horse*, and guide that, that is to guide the life of man? That's a dreadful, spiritual, judicial stroke of God, which we read of *Rom. i. 26.* παρέδωκεν αὐτοὺς ὁ Θεὸς εἰς πάντα ἀτιμίαν ; God by a penal Tradition suffered them to run into the dregs of Immorality, and Pollutions of life ; and that because they abused their light, and be-

came vain in their imaginations, *ver. 21.*

Wild whimsies and fancies in the head, usually mislead men into the puddle and mire of Prophaneness, and then 'tis commonly observed God sets some visible mark of his Displeasure upon them; especially the *Heresiarchs*, or Ring-leaders in Error. *Nestorius* his Tongue was consumed by Worms. *Cerinthus* his Brains knock'd out by the Fall of an House. *Montanus* hang'd himself: It were easie to instance in multitudes of others, whom the visible Hand of God hath marked for a warning to others; but usually the spiritual Errors of the Mind are followed with a Consumption and Decay of Religion in the Soul. If Grace be in the Heart, where Error sways its Scepter in the Head, yet usually there it languishes and withers. They may mistake their *Dropsie*, for growth and flourishing, and think themselves to be more spiritual, because more airy and notional; but if men would judg themselves impartially, they will certainly find that the Seeds of Grace thrive not in the Heart, when shaded and over-dropt by an erroneous Head.

## Ninth Observation.

*'Tis a pernicious Evil, to advance a meer Opinion into the place and seat of an Article of Faith; and to lay as great a stress upon it, as they ought to do upon the most clear and fundamental Point. To be as much concerned for a Tile upon the Roof, as for the Corner-stone, which unites the Walls, and sustains the Building.*

Opinion (as one truly saith) is but Reason's Projector, and the Spy of Truth: It makes in its fullest discovery no more than the dawning and twilight of Knowledg; and yet I know not how it comes to pass, but so it is, that this Idol of the Mind holds such a sway and Empire over all we hold, as if it were all the Day we had. Matters of mere opinion, are every where cried up by some *Errorists*, for *Mathematical Demonstration*, and Articles of Faith, written with a Sun-beam; worshipping the Fancies and Creatures of their own minds, more than God; and putting more trust in their ill-founded Opinions, than in the surer word of Prophecy. Much like that *Humorist* that would not

trust day-light, but kept his *Candle* still burning by him; because (said he) this is not as subject to *Eclipses*, as the Sun is.

And what more frequent, when Controversies grow fervent, than for those that maintain the Error, to boast every silly Argument to be a *Demonstration*; to upbraid and pity the blindness and dulness of their Opposers, as men that shut their eyes against Sun-beams; yea, sometimes to draw their presumptuous Censures through the very hearts of their Opposers, and to insinuate that they must needs hold the Truths of God in unrighteousness, sin against their knowledg, and that nothing keeps them from coming over to them, but Pride, Shame, or some Worldly Interest? What a complicated evil is here! Here's a proud exalting of our own opinions, and an immodest imposing on the minds of others more clear and sound than our own, and a dangerous Usurpation of God's Prerogative in judging the hearts and ends of our Brethren.

#### Tenth Observation.

*Error being conscious to it self of its own weakness, and the strong assaults that will be*

be made upon it, evermore labours to defend and secure it self under the wings of *Antiquity*, *Reason*, *Scripture*, and high pretensions to *Reformation* and *Piety*.

*Antiquity* is a venerable word, but ill used, when made a cloak for *Error*. *Truth* must needs be elder than *Error*, as the *Rule* must necessarily be, before the aberration from it. The gray hairs of *Opinions* are then only *Beauty*, and a *Crown*, when found in the way of *Righteousness*. *Copper* (saith *Learned Dumoulin*) will never become *Gold* by *Age*. A *Lye* will be a *Lye*, let it be never so ancient. We dispute not by *Years*, but by *Reasons* drawn from *Scripture*. That which is now call'd an *Ancient Opinion*, if it be not a true *Opinion*, was once but a new *Error*. When you can tell us how many years are required to turn an *Error* into *Truth*, then we will give more heed to *Antiquity*, when press'd in the service of *Error*, than we now think due to it.

If *Antiquity* will not do, *Reason* shall be press'd to serve *Error's* turn at a dead lift; and indeed the *Pencil* of *Reason* can lay curious *Colours* upon rotten *Timber*,

*ber*, and varnish over erroneous Principles with fair and plausible pretences. What expert Artists have the *Socinians* proved themselves in this matter? But because men are bound to submit human Authority and Reason to Divine Revelation, both must give way and strike fail to the Written Word.

Hence it comes to pass, that the great *Patrons* and *Factors* for Error, do above all things labour to gain countenance to their Errors from the Written Word; and to this end they manifestly wrest and rack the Scriptures to make them subservient to their Opinions; not impartially studying the Scriptures first, and forming their notions and opinions according to them; but they bring their Erroneous Opinions to the Scriptures, and then with all imaginable art and sophistry wiredraw and force the Scriptures to countenance and legitimate their Opinions †.

† Cum unaquæque

Hæresis sui commenti parentem habeat Diabolum, ac pudore tam exosi nominis teneatur; pulcherrimum, & quod super omnia est, nomen Salvatoris profitetur, Scripturarumque dictionibus amicitur, *Athanas. contra Arian.*

\* Take heed.  
(saith one)

But because pretences of *Piety* and \* *Re-*  
*that when Zeal for Reformation knocks at the door, some new Errors step*  
*not in with it, which will as much need an after Reformation.*

*forma-*

*formation* are the strokes that give life to the face of this Idol, and give it the nearest resemblance unto Truth, these therefore never fail to be made use of, and zealously professed in the favour of Error, though there be little of either many times to be found in their Persons, and nothing at all in the Doctrines that lay claim to it.

Eleventh Observation.

*God in all ages in his tender care for his Churches and Truths, hath still qualified and excited his Servants for the defence of his precious Truths, against the Errors and Heresies that have successively assaulted them.*

As Providence is observed in every *Climate* and *Island* of the World to have provided *Antidotes* against the poisonous *Plants* and *Animals* of the Countrey; and the one is never far from the other: So is the care of his Providence much more conspicuous in the case now before us. When, or wheresoever venomous *Errors* and deadly *Heresies* do arise, he hath his servants at hand with *Antidotes* against them.

When



When *Arrius*, that cunning and deadly Enemy to the Deity of Christ, struck at the very heart of our Religion, Faith and Comfort ; a man of subtil Parts, and Blameless Life, which made his Heresie much the more spreading and taking ; the Lord had his well-furnished *Athanasius* in a readiness to resist and confound him. And as he had his *Athanasius* to defend the Deity of *Christ* ; so he wanted not his *Basil* to defend the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit against *Macedonius*.

So when *Pelagius* was busily advancing *Free-will* into the Throne of *Free-grace*, Providence wanted not its Mallet in Learned and Ingenious *Augustin*, to break him and his Idol to pieces : And it is highly remarkable (as the Learned *Dr. Hill* observes) that *Augustin* was born in *Africa* the same day that *Pelagius* was born in *Brittain*.

When *Gotteschalcus* published his dangerous Doctrine about *Predestination*, the Lord drew forth *Hincmarus* to detect and confute that Error, by evincing clearly, that God's Predestination forces no man to Sin.

So from the beginning and first rise of *Popery*, that centre and sink of Errors,  
we

we have a large Catalogue of the Learned and Famous Witnesses, which in all Ages have faithfully resisted and opposed it; and when notwithstanding all, it had even over-run *Europe* like a rapid Torrent, or rather Inundation of the *Ocean*: And *Germany* was brought to that pass, that if the *Pope* had but Commanded it, they would have eaten Grass or Hay *more pecudum*. Then did the Lord bring forth Invincible *Luther*, and with him a troop of Learned Champions, into the field against him; since which time the Cause of *Poper*y is become desperate.

Thus the care of Providence in all ages hath been as much displayed in protecting the Church against the dangers that arose from false Brethren within it, as from avowed persecuting Enemies without it; and had it not been so, the rank Weeds of Heresies and Errors had long since overtopped and choaked the Corn, and made the Church a barren Field.

Twelfth Observation.

*The want of a modest Suspicion, and just reflection, gives both confidence and growth to Erroneous Opinions.*

If

If matters of meer Opinion were kept in their proper place, under the careful guard of Suspicion; they would not make that bustle and confusion in the Churches, they have done, and do at this day.

'Tis confessed, that all Truths are not matters of meer Opinion; neither are all Opinions of equal weight and value; and therefore not to be left hanging in an *equipendious Scepticism*: And yet it is as true, that matters of Opinion ought carefully to be sorted from matters of Faith, and to be kept in their own rank and class, as things doubtful, *quibus potest subesse falsum*; whilst matters of Faith clearly revealed, are to stand upon their own sure and firm *Basis*. The former, *viz.* matters of meer Opinion, we are so to hold, as upon clearer light to be ready to part with them, and give them up into the hands of Truth. The other, *viz.* matters of Faith, we are to hold with resolutions to Live and Dye by them.

What is Opinion, but the wavering of the understanding betwixt probable Arguments, for and against a point of Doctrine? So that it's rather an inclination, than an assertion, as being accompanied

companied with Fear, Floating. and Inconstancy. In such cases there should be a due concession and allowance of other mens Opinions to them, and why not, whilst they offer as fair for the Truth as we? And haply their Parts, Helps, and Industries, are not inferior to ours, it may be beyond them, and we may discern in them as much tenderness of Conscience, and fear of Sin as in our selves. In this case a little more modest Suspicion in our Opinions, would do the Church a great deal of right; and that which should prevail with all modest persons to exercise it, is the just reflection they may make upon their own former confident mistakes.

Thirteenth Observation.

*There is a remarkable involution or concatenation of Errors, one linking in, and drawing another after it.*

Amongst all Erroneous *Sects*, there is still some *πρώτον ψεύδος*, some *Helena*, for whose sake the war against Truth is commenced; and the other lesser Errors are press'd for the sake and service of this leading darling Error. As we see  
the

\* Πρώτον  
 Ψεύδος R.  
 Ecclesiae  
 subji-  
 da esse  
 omnia  
 summo ju-  
 dicio &  
 tribunali  
 Ecclesiae,  
 cui praest  
 Papa, &c.  
 indè con-  
 ficitur  
 immotas  
 habendas  
 esse traditiones omnes R. Ecclesiae, dogmata omnia, decreta seu  
 Pontificum seu Conciliorum. *Fred. Spanhem. Elench. Controv. p. 51.*

the whole \* Troop of *Indulgences, Bulls, Masses, Pilgrimages, Purgatory*, with multitudes more, flow from, and are press'd into the Service of the *Pope's Supremacy and Infallibility*. So in other *Sects*, men are forc'd to entertain many other Errors, which in themselves considered, they have no great kindness for; but they are necessitated to entertain them in defence of that great, leading darling Opinion they first espoused.

Those that cry up and trumpet abroad the Sovereign power of *Free-will*, even without the preventing Grace of God, enabling men to supernatural works, as if the *Will* alone had escaped all damage by the Fall, and *Adam* had not sinned in that noble Virgin-faculty. To defend this *Idol*, which is the *πρώτον ἰεῦδος*, they are forced to oppugn and deny several other great and weighty Truths, as particular eternal Election, the certainty of the Saints Perseverance, the necessity of preventing Grace in Conversion; which Errors are but the outworks raised in defence of that Idol.

So in the *Baptismal Controversie*, men would never have adventured to deny God's *Covenant* with *Abraham*, to be a *Covenant* of *Grace*; or to assert the *Ceremonial Law*, so full of *Christ*, to be an *Adam's Covenant* of works; and *Circumcision*, expressly called *the seal of the Righteousness of Faith*, to be the condition of *Adam's Covenant*. Much less would they place all the elect of God in *Israel*, at one and the same time, under the severest *Curse* and *Rigor* of the *Law*, and under the pure *Covenant* of *Grace*, were they not forced into these *Errors* and *Absurdities* by dint of *Argument*, in defence of their darling *Opinion*.

Fourteenth Observation.

*Errors abound most, and spring fastest in the times of the Churches Peace, Liberty, and outward Prosperity under Indulgent Rulers.* \* *Arrianism* sprang up under *Constantine's* mild Government.

\* *Arrius Alexandrinus*  
Hæresin  
insanam

incipit *Alexandriæ* sub annum Domini 324, ut *Eusebius* annotavit.  
Anno Imperii *Constantini* 15.

*Christian benevolent Rulers* are choice *Mercies* and *Blessings* to the Church. Such as rule over men in the fear of God, are to the Church, as well as *Civil State*,  
like

*like the light of the morning, when the Sun  
ariseeth, even a morning without Clouds, as  
the tender Grass springing out of the earth  
by clear shining after rain, 2 Sam. 23. 4.*

But this as well as other mercies, is liable to abuse; and under the influences of indulgent Governours, Error as well as Truth, springs up, flowers, and seeds. Persecution gives check to the wantonness of mens Opinions, and finds them other and better work to do. *Caterpillars* and *Locusts* are swept away by the bitter *East-winds*, but swarm in *Halcyon* days, and fall upon every green thing. So that the Church rides in this respect more safely in the stormy *Sea*, than in the calm *Harbour*. Peace and Prosperity is apt to cast its Watchmen into a sleep, and whilst they sleep, the envious one soweth *Tares*, Matth. 13. 25.

'Twas under *Constantine's* benign Government that Poison was poured out into the Churches. The abuse of such an excellent mercy provokes the Lord to cut it short, and cause the Clouds to gather again after the Rain. We have found it so once and again (alas! that I must say again), in this wanton and foolish Nation. Professors could live quietly together, Converse, Fast, and Pray,

pray in a Christian manner together under common Calamities and Dangers; differences in Opinion were suspended by consent. But no sooner do we feel a warm Sun-blast of Liberty and Peace, but it revives and heats our dividing Lusts and Corruptions, instead of our Graces. The Sheep of Christ fight with each other; though their furious pushing one at another is known to presage a change of Weather.

Fifteenth Observation.

*Errors in the tender bud and first spring of them, are comparatively shy and modest, to what they prove afterwards; when they have spread and rooted themselves into the minds of multitudes, and think it time to set up and juggle for themselves in the World\*.*

\* *Eunomius*  
hæresin

suam ( communicato Consilio cum Eudoxio) aliquamdiu occultè & intricatè ac perplexè sparfit; tandem animo sumpto, quæ hæreticè sentiret, in cœtibus publicis palam ostendit. *Theodoret. lib. 2. cap. 29.*

They usually begin in modest Scruples, conscientious Doubts and Queries. But having once gotten many Abettors, and amongst them some that have subtilty and ability to plead and dispute their

C                      Cause;



Cause, they ruffle it out at another rate; glory in their numbers, piety and ability of their Party; boast and glory in the conceited Victories they have atchieved over their Opposers. The Masque drops off its face, and it appears with a brow of Brass, becomes insolent and turbulent both in Church and State. Of which it is easie to give many pregnant instances, in the *Arians* of old, and more recent Errors, which I shall not at present be concerned with, lest I exasperate, whilst I seek to heal the Wound.

\* The Donatists in Augustin's time made stymore, that men might not be compell'd to live holy. Coacta & in vita pietas, they mention'd it with dislike; but when grown in power, facti insolentes vim Orthodoxis inferebant, inso-much that Dulcitius the Tribune was feign to defend the Orthodox against them with an Army.

\* Should a man hear the Sermons, or private Discourses of *Errorists*, whilst the Design is but forming and projecting, he should meet with little to raise his jealousy. They speak in Generals, and guard their Discourses with politick Reserves. You shall not see, tho you seem to see, the tendency of their Discourses. Hence the Apostle saith, 2 Pet. 2. 1. *ἡσυχώσουσιν, They shall privily (or covertly) bring in damnable Heresies*: As the Boy in *Plutarch*, being asked by a Stranger, what is that you carry so closely under your

your Cloak? wittily answered, You may well know that I intend you shall not know it, by my so carrying it.

Sixteenth Observation.

*Nothing gives more countenance and increase to Error, than a weak and feeble defence of the Truth against it. \**

\* Quidam  
verò non

satis Cœlestibus literis eruditi, cùm veritatis accusatoribus respondere non possent, objicientibus, vel impossibile, vel incongruens esse, ut Deus in uterum se mulieris includeret, &c. quæ omnia cùm neque ingenio, neque doctrinâ defendere ac refutare possent (neq enim vim rationemque penitus pervidebant) depravati sunt ab itinere recto, & cœlestes literas corrupêrunt, ut novam sibi doctrinam sine ullâ radice ac stabilitate componerent. *Lactan. lib. 4. cap. 30. De Hæresibus.*

The strength of Error lieth much in the weakness of the Advocates and Defendants of Truth. Every Friend of Truth is not fit to make a Champion for it. Many love it, and pray for it, that cannot defend and dispute for it. *I can dye for the Truth (said the Martyr) but I cannot dispute for it. Zuinglius* blamed *Carlostadius* for undertaking the Controversie of that Age, because (said he) *non habuit satis humerorum, his shoulders were too weak for the burthen.*

It can be said of few, as *Cicero* speaks of one, *Nullam unquam in disputationibus rem defendit, quam non probârit; nullum*

*oppugnavit, quem non everterit; He undertook no Cause in disputation, which he could not defend; he opposed no Adversary, but could overthrow him.* He is a rare and happy Disputant, who can clear and carry every point of Truth, of which he undertakes the defence. 'Twere happy for the Church, if the abilities and prudence of all her Friends were commensurate and equal to their love and zeal. Every little foyl, every weak or impertinent Answer of a Friend to Truth, is quickly turned into a weapon to wound it the deeper.

#### Seventeenth Observation.

*Errors of Judgment are not cured by compulsion and external force, but by rational conviction, and proper spiritual Remedies.*

Bodily sufferings rather spread than cure intellectual Errors. I deny not but fundamental Heresies breaking forth into open Blasphemies against God, and Seditions in the Civil State, ought to be restrained. 'Tis no way fit men should be permitted to go up and down the World with Plague-sores running upon them. Nor do I understand why men  
should

should be more cautious to preserve their Bodies than their Souls. But I speak here of such Errors as may consist with the foundations of the Christian Faith, and are not destructive to Civil Government. They take the ready way to spread and perpetuate them, that think to root them out of the World by such improper and unwarrantable means as external force and violence. The Wind never causes an *Earth-quake*, till it be pent in, and restrained from motion.

We neither find, nor can imagine, That those Church or State *Exorcists* should ever be able to effect their end, who think to confine all the Spirits of Error within the Circle of a severe Uniformity. Fires, Prisons, Pillories, Stigmatizings, Mutilations, Whippings, Banishments, &c. are the *Popish Topicks* to confute Errors. 'Tis highly remarkable, that the World long ago consented for the avoiding of dissenting judgment, to enslave themselves and their Posterity to the most fatal and destructive Heresie that ever it groaned under.

'Tis a rational and proper Observation long since made by *Lactantius*, *Quis mihi imponat necessitatem credendi, quod nolim, vel non credendi, quod velim?* *Who can*

*force me to believe what I will not, or not to believe what I will ?* The rational and gentle Spirit of the Gospel is the only proper and effectual method to cure the Diseases of the Mind.

### Eighteenth Observation.

*Erroneous Doctrines producing Divisions and fierce Contentions amongst Christians, prove a fatal Stumbling-block to the World ; fix their Prejudices , and obstruct their conversion to Christ. \**

\* Many

Enemies to

*Christianity flock to the Nicene Synod, odio Christianorum, propter abolitam Gentilium superstitionem , ut haberent in quos illuderent. Say the Centurists.*

They dissolve the lovely union of the Saints, and thereby scare off the World from coming into the Church. This is evidently implied in that Prayer of Christ, *John 17.* That all his People might be one, that the World might believe the Father had sent him. There is indeed no just cause for any to take offence at the Christian Reformed Religion , because so many Errors and Heresies spring up among the Professors of it, and divide them into so many Sects and Parties : for in all this we find no more than what was predicted

predicted from the beginning, 1 Cor. 11. 18, 19. *I hear there be divisions among you, and I partly believe it: for there must be also Heresies among you, &c.* And again, Acts 20. 30. *Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things to draw away Disciples after them.* \*

\* Ante  
omnia, sci-

re nos convenit, & ipsum, & legatos ejus prædixisse, quòd plurimæ Sectæ, & Hæreses deberent existere, quæ concordiam sancti corporis rumpèrent: ac monuisse, ut summâ prudentiâ cavere-mus, ne quando in laqueos & fraudes illius adversarii nostri cum quo nos Deus luctari voluit, incideremus. *Lactan.* lib. 4. cap. 30.

The very same things strongly confirm the Christian Religion, which wicked men improve to the reproach and prejudice of it. When *Celsus* objected to the Christians the variety and contrariety of their Opinions; saying, *Were we willing to turn Christians, we know not of what Party to be, seeing you all pretend to Christ, and yet differ so much from one another.* *Tertullian*, the Christian Apologist, made him this wise and pertinent Reply, *Hæreses non dolemus venisse, quia novimus esse prædictas.* We are not troubled that Heresies are come, seeing it was predicted that they must come. These things destroy not the credibility of the Christian Religion, but increase and confirm it,

C 4

by

by evidencing to the World the truth and certainty of Christ's Predictions (which were quite beyond all human foresight) that as soon as his Doctrine should be propagated, and a Church raised by it, Errors and Heresies should spring up among them for the tryal of their Faith and Constancy.

Nevertheless, this no way excuses the sinfulness of Errors and Divisions in the Church. Christ's Prediction neither infuses, nor excuses the Evil predicted by him: for what he elsewhere speaks of Scandals, is as true in this case of Errors. *These things must come to pass, but wo be to that man by whom they come.*

#### Nineteenth Observation.

*How specious and taking soever the pretences of Error be, and how long soever they maintain themselves in esteem among men, they are sure to end in the loss and shame of their Authors and Abettors at last. \**

\* Post fec-  
dum Arian

obitum, quamplurimos ex iis, qui ab Ario prius decepti fuerant, ad sanitatem rediisse, scribit Athanasius, ad Serapionem.

Truth is a Rock, the waves of Error  
that dash against, evermore return in  
froth

froth and foam : yea, they foam out their own shame, saith the Apostle, *Jud. 13*. What *Tacitus* spake of crafty Counsels, I may as truly apply to crafty Errors, *Consilia callida primâ specie leta, tractatu dura, eventu tristia* : They are pleasant in their beginnings, difficult in their management, and sad in their event and issue.

Suppose a man have union with Christ, yet his Errors are but so much Hay, Wood, Straw, Stubble built, or rather endeavoured to be built upon a foundation of Gold : this the fiery tryal burns up ; the Author of them suffers loss ; and though himself may be saved, yet so as by fire, *1 Cor. 3. 12, 13, 14, 15*. the meaning is, he makes a narrow escape. As a man that leaps out of an House on fire, from a Window or Battlement, with great difficulty saves his life ; just so *Errorists* shall be glad to quit their Erroneous Opinions, which they have taken so much pains to build, and draw others into : and then, oh what a shame must it be for a good man to think, how many days and nights have I worse than wasted, to defend and propagate an Error, which might have been employed in a closer study of Christ and mine own heart ! *Keckerman* relates a Story of a vo-

cal



*Keck. Physf.*  
p. 16.  
Albertus  
magnus.

*cal Statue*, which was thirty years a making by a cunning *Artist*, which by the motion of its Tongue with little Wheels, Wires, &c. could articulate the sound, and pronounce an entire Sentence. This *Statue* saluting *Aquinas*, surprized him, and at one stroke he utterly destroyed the curious *Machin*, which exceedingly troubled the fond Owner of it, and made him say with much concernment, *Uno ictu opus triginta annorum destruxisti, thou hast at one stroke destroyed the study and labour of thirty years.*

Beside, What shame and trouble must it be to the zealous Promoters of Errors, not only to cast away so vainly and unprofitably their own time and strength, which is bad enough : but also to ensnare and allure the Souls of others into the same, or worse mischief ? for though God may save and recover you, those that have been misled by you may perish.

#### Twentieth Observation.

*If ever Errors be cured, and the Peace and Unity of the Church established, men must be convinced of, and acquainted with the Occasions and Causes both within and without themselves, from whence their*

*their Errors do proceed; and must both know and apply the proper Rules and Remedies for the prevention or cure of them.*

There is much difference betwixt an *Occasion*, and a proper *Cause*; these two are heedfully to be distinguished. Critical and exact *Historians*, as *Polybius* and *Tacitus*, distinguish betwixt the ἀρχή, and the ἀρτία, the beginning *Occasions*, and the real *Causes* of a *War*; and so we ought in this case of *Errors* carefully to distinguish them. The most excellent and innocent things in the World, such as the Scriptures of Truth, the Liberty of Christians, the Tranquility and Peace of the Church (as you will hear anon) may, by the Subtilty of *Satan* working in conjunction with the Corruptions of mens hearts, become the *Occasions*, but can never be the proper culpable *Causes* of *Errors*.

Accordingly having made the twenty *Remarks* upon the *Nature* and *Growth* of *Errors* (which cannot so well be brought within the following Rules of method) I shall in the next place proceed in the discovery both of the mere *Occasion*, as also of the proper culpable *Causes* of *Er-*  
*rors,*

*rors*, together with the proper *Preventives* and most effectual *Remedies* placed together in the following order.

*The Occasion.*

DIVINE  
PERMISS-  
SION.

The holy God, who is a God of Truth, *Deut.* 32. 4. and hateth *Errors*, *Rev.* 2. 6. the God of Order, and hates Confusions and Schisms in his Church, *1 Cor.* 14. 33. is yet pleased to permit *Errors* and *Heresies* to arise, without whose permission they could never spring. And this he doth for the tryal of his Peoples Faith and Constancy, and for a spiritual punishment upon some men for the abuse of his known Truths; and by the permission of these Evils he advanceth his own Glory, and the good of his Church and People. *Augustine* answers that Question, Why doth not God, since he hates *Errors*, sweep them out of the World? Because (saith he) it is an act of greater power to bring good out of evil, than not to suffer Evils to be at all.

Satan's Design in *Errors* is to cloud and darken God's Name and precious Truths; to destroy the Beauty, Strength, and Order of the Church. But God's ends in permitting and sending *Errors*, are (1.) to plague and punish men for their abuse of  
Light,

Light, *2 Theff. 2. 11.* For this cause God shall send them strong Delusions, &c. (2.) To prove and try the Sincerity and Constancy of our hearts, *Dent. 13. 1, 3.* *1 Cor. 11. 19.* And lastly, By these things the Saints are awakened to a more diligent search of the Scriptures, which are the more critically read and examined upon the tryal of Spirits and Doctrines by them, *1 Joh. 4. 1.* Believe not every Spirit, but try the Spirits; And *Rev. 2. 2.* Thou hast tried them, that say they are Apostles, &c.

*The Prevention.*

Though *Heresies* and *Errors* must (for the Reasons assigned) break forth into the World, and God will turn them eventually into his own glory, and the benefit of his Church: yet it is a dreadful judgment to be delivered over to a spirit of Error, to be the Authors and Abettors of them; this is a judicial stroke of God: and as ever we hope to escape, and stand clear out of the way of it, let us carefully shun these three following Causes and Provocations thereof.

(1.) Want of love to the Truth, which God hath made to shine *about* us in the means, or *into* us by actual illumination under the means of knowledge.  
*2 Theff.*

2 *Thess.* 2. 10, 11. Because they received not the love of Truth, God gave them up to strong Delusions. They are justly plagued with Error that slight Truth. False Doctrines are fit Plagues for false Hearts.

(2.) Beware of Pride and Wantonness of Mind. 'Tis not so much the *Weakness* as the *Wantonness* of the Mind, which provokes God to inflict this Judgment. None likelier to make *Seducers* than *Boasters*, *Jude* 16. *Arrius* gloried that God had revealed some things to him, which were hidden from the Apostles themselves. *Simon Magus* boasted himself to be the mighty Power of God. The erroneous *Pharisees* loved the praises of Men. When the *Papist* reproached *Luther* that he affected to have his Disciples called *Lutherans*, he replied, *Non sic, ô fatue, non sic; oro ut nomen meum taceatur*: he disdain'd that the Children of Christ should be called by so vile a name as his.

(3.) Beware you neglect not Prayer, to be kept sound in your Judgments, and guided by the Spirit into all Truth, *Psal.* 119. 10. *With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander, or err, from thy Commandments.* This do, and you

you are safe from such a judicial Tradition.

*The First Cause.*

We shall next speak of the Causes of Error found in the evil Dispositions of the Subjects, which prepare and incline them to receive Erroneous Doctrine and Opinions, and even catch at the Occasions and least Sparkles of Temptation, as dry Tinder : and amongst these is found,

(1.) A perverse wrangling Humour at the pretended OBSCURITY of the Scriptures. The *Romish* Party snatch at this Occasion, and make it the proper Cause, when indeed it is but a pickt Occasion, of the Errors and Mistakes among men. They tell us the Scriptures are so difficult, obscure, and perplex, that if private men will trust to them as their only Guide, they will inevitably run into Errors, and their only relief is to give up their Souls to the conduct of their Church ; whereas indeed the true Cause of Error is not so much in the Obscurity of the Word, as in the corruption of the mind, 1 Tim. 6. 5. 2 Tim. 3. 8.

We do acknowledge there are in the Scriptures, *τινα δυσνόητα, καὶ τινα ἀσπερμι-  
στά.*

*Mat.* some things hard to be understood; *2 Pet.* 3. 16. the sublime and mysterious nature of the matter rendering it so: and some things hard to be interpreted from the manner of expression; as indeed all mystical parts of Scripture and Prophetical predictions are, and ought to be delivered. The Spirit of God this way designedly casts a veil over them, till the proper season of their revelation and accomplishment be come. Besides (as the Learned *Glossius* observes) in *Paul's* style there are found some peculiar words and forms of speech, which ordinary Rules of *Grammar* take no notice, nor give any parallel Examples of: as *to be buried with Christ*; *to be baptized into his death*; to which I may add, *to be circumcised in him*, &c. There are also multitude of words found in Scripture of various and vastly different Significations; and accordingly there is a diversity, and sometimes a contrariety of senses given of them by *Expositors*; which to an *Humourist* or quarrelsome Wit gives an occasion to vent his Errors with a plausible appearance of Scripture-consent. And indeed *Tertullian* saith, *Non periclitor dicere ipsas Scripturas ita dispositas esse, ut materiam subministrarent Hæreticis.* The  
 Scriptures

Scriptures are so disposed, that Hereticks may pick Occasions; and those that will not be satisfied, may be hardened. See *Mark* 4. 11, 12.

But all this notwithstanding, the great and necessary things to our Salvation are so perspicuously and plainly revealed in the Scriptures, that even Babes in Christ do apprehend and understand them, *Matth.* 11. 25. *1 Cor.* 1. 27, 28, 29. And though there be difficulties in other points more remote from the foundation; yet the Spirit of God is not to be accused, but rather his Wisdom to be admired herein. For (1.) this serves to excite our most intense study and diligence, which by this difficulty is made necessary, *Prov.* 2. 3, 4, 5. the very *Prophets*, yea the very *Angels* search into these things, *1 Pet.* 1. 11, 12. (2.) Hereby a standing Ministry in the Church is made necessary, *Nehem.* 8. 8. *Eph.* 4. 11, 12, 13. So that to pretend *Obscurity* of Scripture to be the culpable cause of *Error*, when indeed the fault is in our selves; this is too much like our Father *Adam*, which would implicitly accuse God, to excuse himself; he laid it upon the *Woman* which God gave him, and we upon the *Scriptures* which God hath given us.



*The Remedies.*

The proper *Remedies* and *Preventives* in this case are an heedful attendance to, and practice of these *Rules*.

*Rule I.*

Let all obscure and difficult Texts of Scripture be constantly examined and expounded according to the Analogy or proportion of Faith, which is St. Paul's own Rule, *Rom. 12. 6. Let him that prophesieth, (i. e. expoundeth the Scripture in the Church) do it according to the proportion of faith.* The Analogy or proportion of Faith is what is taught plainly and uniformly in the whole Scriptures of Old and New Testament, as the rule of our Faith and Obedience. Whilst we carefully and sincerely attend hereunto, we are secured from sinful corrupting the word of God. Admit of no sense which interfereth with this proportion of Faith. If men have no regard to this, but take liberty to rend off a single Text from the body of Truth to which it belongs, and put a peculiar interpretation upon it which is absonous and discordant to other Scriptures, what woful work will they quickly make?

Give

Give but a *Papist* liberty to take that Scripture, *Jam.* 2. 24. out of the frame of Scripture, *A man is justified by works, and not by faith only*; and expound it without regard to the Tenor of the Gospel-doctrine of *Justification* in *Paul's Epistles* to the *Romans* and *Galatians*, and a gross Error starts up immediately. Give but a *Socinian* the like liberty to practise upon *John* 14. 28. and a gross Heresie shall presently look with an Orthodox face.

*Rule II.*

Never put a new sense upon words of Scripture in favour of your preconceived Notions and Opinions, nor wrest it from its general and common use and sense. This is not to interpret, but to rack the Scriptures, as that word *ερειλύν* signifies, *2 Pet.* 3. 16. *Interpretis officium est, non quid ipse velit, sed quid censeat ille, quem interpretatur, exponere*, as *Hieron.* against *Ruff.* speaks. We are not to make the Scriptures speak what we think, but what the *Prophet* or *Apostle* thought, whom we interpret. In *1 Cor.* 7. 14. we meet with the word [*holy*] applied to the Children of Believers; that word is above 500 times used for a

state of separation to God : Therefore to make it signify in that place nothing but Legitimacy, is a bold and daring practising upon the Scripture.

*Rule III.*

Whenever you meet with an obscure place of Scripture, let the Context of that Scripture be diligently and thoroughly searched ; for 'tis usual with God to set up some light there to guide us through the obscurity of a particular Text. And there is much truth in the Observation of the *Rabbines*, *Nulla est objectio in Lege, qua non habet solutionem in latere. There's no scruple or objection in the Law, but it hath a solution at the side of it.*

*Rule IV.*

Let one Testament freely cast its light upon the other ; and let not men undervalue or reject an *Old Testament* Text, as no way useful to clear and establish a *New-Testament* Point of Faith or Duty. Each *Testament* reflects light upon the other. The *Jews* reject the *New-Testament*, and many among us sinfully slight the *Old*: But without the help of both, we can never understand the mind of  
God

God in either. 'Tis a good Rule in the *Civil-Law*, *Turpe est de Lege judicare, tota lege nondum inspectâ*. We must inspect the whole Law, to know the sense of any particular Law.

*Rule V.*

Have a due regard to that sense given of obscure places of Scripture, which hath not only the current sense of Learned *Expositors*, but also naturally agrees with the scope of the place. A careless neglect and disregard to this, is justly blamed by the Apostle, 1 *Tim.* i. 7.

*Cause II.*

A Second evil temper in the Subject, disposing and inclining men to receive and suck in erroneous Doctrines and Opinions, is the *ABUSE* of that just and due *CHRISTIAN LIBERTY* allowed by Christ to all his people to read, examine, and judge the sense of Scriptures with a private judgment of discretion.

Contro-  
versie A-  
nabaptisti-  
cæ exortæ  
sunt supe-  
riore sæ-  
culo vari-  
is in Euro-

*pæ locis, puta à Muntzero Saxone cum Sociis Anno MDXXI. occasione scripti Lutheri de libertate Christianâ, Fred. Spanh. Elench. Contr. p. 95.*

This is a glorious acquisition, and blessed fruit of Reformation, to vindicate

cate and recover that just Right, and gracious Grant made to us by Christ and the Apostles, out of the injurious hands of our Popish Enemies, who had usurped and invaded it. The exercise of this *Liberty*, is at once a Duty commanded by Christ, and commended in Scripture. 'Tis commanded by Christ, *John 5. 39. Search the Scriptures*, saith Christ to the people. *1 Cor. 10. 15. I speak as to wise men; judge you what I say.* And the exercise of this private judgment of discretion by the people, is highly commended by St. Paul in the *Bereans*, *Acts 17. 11. These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the Word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily whether those things were so.* This *Liberty* is not allowed in that latitude in any Religion, as it is in the Christian Religion, nor enjoyed in its full liberty, as it is in the Reformed Religion, whose glory it is that it allows its Principles and Doctrines to be critically examined and tryed of all Men by the Rule of the Word, as well knowing, the more it is sifted and searched by its Professors, the more they will be still confirmed and satisfied in the truth of it.

But  
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But yet this gracious and just liberty of Christians, suffers a double abuse: One from the *Popish* Enemies, who injuriously restrain and deny it to the people. Another, by Protestants themselves, who sinfully stretch and extend it beyond the just degree and measure in which Christ allows it to them.

The *Pope* injuriously restrains it, discerning the danger that must necessarily follow the concession of such a liberty to the people, to compare his superstitious and erroneous Doctrines with the Rule of the Word.

St. *Peter*, in 2 *Pet.* 1. 19. tells the people they have a more sure Word of Prophecy, whereunto they do well that they take heed. Certainly the *Pope* forgot either that he was *Peter's* Successour; or that ever St. *Peter* told the people they did well to make use of that liberty, which he denies them. Mr. *Paol* tells us of a *Spaniard* that used this expression to an *English* Merchant, You people of England (said he) are happy, you have liberty to see with your own eyes, and to examine the Doctrines delivered to you, upon which your everlasting Life depends; but we dare not say our souls are our own, but are commanded to believe whatever our

*Teachers tell us, be it never so unreasonable or ridiculous.* This is a most injurious and sinful restraint upon it on the one side.

And then Secondly, 'Tis too frequently abused, by stretching it beyond Christ's allowance and intendment upon the other side; when every ignorant and confident person shall, under pretence of liberty granted by Christ, rudely break in upon the Sacred Text, distort, violate and abuse the Scriptures at pleasure, by putting such strange and foreign senses upon them, as the Spirit of God never

\* *Prov.* 8. meant or intended \*.

22.

Quod dictum scribit Epiphanius, primam Ario præbuisse occasionem, hæresin contra filium dei fingendi.

How often have I heard that Scripture, *Micha* 4. 10. *They shall be brought even to Babylon*; confidently interpreted, for almost, but not full home to *Babylon*, against the very *Grammar* of the Text, and the Truth of the *History*? And so again, that place, *Isa.* 58. 8. *The glory of the Lord shall be thy reward*, through ignorance of the word, read *re-reward*, that is, a double reward to his people? But these are small matters compared with those grosser abuses of Scripture by  
the

the ignorant and unlearned, which prejudice Truth, and too much countenance Popish Reproaches.

*The Remedies.*

The proper way to prevent and remedy this mischief, is not by depriving any Man of his just Liberty, either to read, or judge for himself what God speaks in his Word, and think that way to cure Errors; that were the same thing as to cut off the Head to cure an Head-ach. Leave that sinful policy with the false Religion. Let those only that know they do evil, be afraid of coming to the light. But the proper course of preventing the mischiefs that come this way, is by labouring to bound and contain Christians within those *limits* Christ himself hath set unto this liberty which he hath granted them. And these are such as follow :

*Limitation I.*

Tho' Christ have indulged to the meanest and weakest Christian a liberty to read and judge of the Scriptures for himself; yet he hath neither thereby, nor therewith granted him a liberty publickly to Expound and Preach the  
Word



Word to others: That's quite another thing.

Every Man that can read the Scriptures, and judge of their sense, is not thereby presently made Christ's Commission-Officer, publickly and authoritatively to Preach and Inculcate the same to others: Two things are requisite to such an employment, *viz. Proper Qualifications*, 1 Tim. 3. *And a solemn Call or designation*, Rom. 10. 14, 15. The Ministry is a distinct Office, *Acts* 20. 17, 28. 1 *Thes.* 5. 12. and none but qualified and ordained persons can Authoritatively Preach the Word, 2 *Tim.* 1. 6. 1 *Tim.* 4. 14. 1 *Tim.* 5. 22.

Christians may privately edify one another by reading the Scriptures, communicating their sense one to another of them, admonishing, counselling, reproving one another in a private fraternal way, at seasons wherein they interfere not with more publick Duties: But for every one that hath confidence enough (and the ignorant usually are best stock'd with it) to assume a liberty without due Qualification or Call, to Expound and give the Sense of Scriptures, and pour forth his crude and unstudied Notions, as the pure sense and meaning of  
of

of God's Spirit in the Scriptures; this is what Christ never allowed, and through this Flood-gate Errors have broken in, and overflowed the Church of God, to the great scandal of Religion, and confirmation of Popish Enemies.

*Limitation II.*

Though there be no part of Scripture shut up or restrained from the knowledg or use of any Christian; yet Jesus Christ hath recommended to Christians of different abilities, the study of some parts of Scripture rather than others, as more proper and agreeable to their Age and Stature in Religion.

Christians are by the *Apostle* rank'd into three Classes, *Fathers, Young-men, and Little Children*, 1 *John* 2. 13. and accordingly the Wisdom of Christ hath directed to that sort of food which is proper to either: For there is in the Word all sorts of Food suitable to all Ages in Christ; there's both *Milk* for *Babes*, and *strong Meat* for *grown Christians*, Heb. 5. 13, 14. Those that are unskilful in the Word of Righteousness, should feed upon *Milk*, that is, the easie, plain, but most nutritive and pleasant practical Doctrines of the Gospel. But *strong Meat* (saith

(saith he) that is, the more abstruse, deep, and mysterious truths, belongeth to them that are of full Age, even those who, by reason of use, have their Senses exercised to discern both good and evil; that is, *Truth* and *Error*. To the same purpose he speaks, 1 Cor. 3. 2. *I have fed you with milk, and not with meat; for hitherto ye were not able to bear it.*

Art thou a weak unstudied Christian? a Babe in Christ? Then the easier, and more nutritive Milk of plain Gospel-Doctrine is fitter for thee, and will do thee more good, than the stronger Meat of profound and more mysterious Points; or the Bones of Controversy, which are too hard for thee to deal with.

God hath blessed this Age with great variety of sound and allowed *Expositors* in our own Language, by the diligent study of which, and prayer for the illumination and guidance of the Spirit, you may not only attain unto the true sense and meaning of the more plain and obvious; but also unto greater knowledge, and clearer insight into the more obscure and controverted parts of Scripture.

## Cause III.

There is also another evil disposition in the Subject, rendring it easily receptive of *Errors*, and that is spiritual *SLOTHFULNESS* and carelessness in a due and serious search of the whole Scripture, with a sedate and rational consideration of every part and particle therein, which may give us any, though the least light to understand the mind of God in those obscure and difficult points we search after the knowledge of.

Truth lies deep, as the rich Veins of Gold do, *Prov.* 2. If we will get the treasure, we must not only *beg*, as he directs, *vers.* 3. but *dig* also *vers.* 4. else as he speaks, *Prov.* 14. 23. *The talk of the lips tends only to poverty.* We are not to take up with that which lies uppermost, and next at hand upon the surface of the Text; but to search with the most sedate and considerative mind into all parts of the written Word, examining every Text which hath any respect to the truth we are searching for, heedfully to observe the Scope, Antecedents, and Consequents, and to value every *Apex*, *Title*, and *Iota*; for each of these are of  
Divine

Divine Authority, *Matt.* 5. 18. and sometimes greater weight is laid upon a small word, yea, upon the addition or change of a Letter in a word, as appears in the names of *Abram* and *Sarai*.

It will require some strength of mind, and great sedulity, to lay all parts of Scripture before us, and to compare words with words, and things with things, as the Apostle speaks, *1 Cor.* 2. 13. *comparing spiritual things with spiritual*. And though it be true that some important Doctrines, as that of *Justification by Faith*, are methodically disposed, and thoroughly clear'd and settled in one and the same Context; yet it is as true, that very many other points of Faith and Duty are not so digested, but are delivered *sparsim*, here a little, and there a little, as he speaks, *Isa.* 28. 10. You must not think to find all that belongs to one Head or Point of Faith, or Duty, lay'd together in a *System*, or common place in Scripture; but scattered abroad in several pieces, some in the *Old Testament*, and some in the *New*, at a great distance one from another.

Now in our searches and inquiries after the full and satisfying knowledg of the Will of God in such Points, it is necessary

cessary that the whole Word of God be thoroughly searched, and all those parcels brought together to an interview. *Ex. Gr.*

If a Man would see the entire discovery that was made of Christ, to the Fathers, under the *Old-Testament*, he shall not find it laid together in any one Prophet; but shall find that one speaks to one part of it, and another to another.

*Moses* gives the first general hint of it, *Gen. 3. 15. The seed of the woman shall break the serpents head.* But then if you would know more particularly of whose Seed, according to the flesh, he should come, you must turn to *Gen. 22. 18. In thy seed* (saith God to *Abraham*) *shall all nations of the earth be blessed.* And if you yet doubt what Seed God means there, you must go to the Apostle, *Gal. 3. 16. To thy seed*, which is *Christ*. If you would further know the place of his Nativity, the Prophet *Micha* must inform you of that, *Mic. 5. 2. it should be Bethlehem-Ephrata.* If you inquire of the quality of his Parent, another Prophet gives you that, *Isa. 7. 14. Behold, a Virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and call his name Immanuel.* If the time of his Birth be inquired

inquired after, *Moses* and *Daniel* must inform you of that, *Gen.* 49.10. *Dan.* 9.24.

So under the *New-Testament*, If a Man inquire about the change of the *Sabbath*, he must not expect to find a formal repeal of the Seventh day, and an express institution of the first day in its room; but he is to consider,

*First*, What the *Evangelist* speaks, *Mark* 2. 28. That Christ is Lord of the *Sabbath*, and so had power, not only to dispense with it, but to change it.

*Secondly*, That on the first day of the Week Christ rose from the dead, *Matt.* 28. 1, 2. And that this is that great day, foretold to be the day to be solemnized upon that account, *Psal.* 118. 24.

*Thirdly*, That accordingly the first day of the Week is emphatically styled the Lord's day, *Rev.* 1. 10. where you find his own name written upon it.

*Fourthly*, You shall find this was the day on which the *Apostles* and Primitive Christians assembled together for the stated and solemn performance of Publick Worship, *John* 20. 19. and other publick Church-Acts and Duties, *1 Cor.* 16. 1, 2. And so by putting together, and considering all these Particulars, we draw a just Conclusion, That it is the Will

Will of God, that since the Resurrection of Christ, the first day of the week should be observed as the Christian-Sabbath.

In like manner as for the Baptizing of Believers *Infants*; We are not to expect it in the express words of a *New-Testament*-Institution or Command, that *Infants* under the Gospel should be Baptized; but God hath left us to gather satisfaction about his Will and our Duty in that point, by comparing and considering the several Scriptures of the *Old* and *New-Testament* which relate to that matter; which if we be impartial and considerative, we may do,

*First*, By considering, that by God's express Command, *Gen.* 17. 9, 10. the Infant Seed of his People were taken in to Covenant with their Parents, and the then Sign of that Covenant commanded to be applied to them.

*Secondly*, That though the Sign be altered, the Promise and Covenant is still the same, and runs as it did before, to Believers and their Children, *Acts* 2. 38, 39.

*Thirdly*, That the federal holiness of our Children is plainly asserted under the *New-Testament*, *1 Cor.* 7. 14. *Rom.* 11. 16.

E

*Fourthly*,



*Fourthly*, We shall further find, that *Baptism* succeeds in the room of *Circumcision*, and that by an Argument drawn from the compleariness of our Privileges under the *New-Testament*, no way inferior, but rather more extensive than those of the *Jews*, Col. 2. 10, 11, 12.

*Fifthly*, We shall find that upon the Conversion of any *Master* or *Parent*, the whole Household were Baptized. By putting all these things, with some others, together, we may arrive to the desired satisfaction about the Will of God in this matter.

But some Men want abilities, and others are too sluggish and lazy to gather together, compare and weigh all these and many more hints and discoveries of the Mind of God, which would give much light unto this point; but they take an easier and cheaper way to satisfy themselves with what lies uppermost upon the surface of Scripture, and so, as it were by consent, let go, and lose their own, and their Childrens blessed and invaluable Privileges, for want of a little labour and patience to search the Scriptures; a folly which few would be guilty of, if but a small earthly inheritance were concerned therein.

*The*

*The Remedies.*

To cure this Spiritual sluggishness, and awaken us to the most serious and diligent search after the Will of God in such controversial and doubtful points, that we may not neglect the smallest hint given us about it, the following *Considerations* will be found of great use and weight.

*Consideration I.*

The most sedate, impartial, and diligent inquiries after the Will of God revealed in his Word, is a Duty expressly enjoined by his Sovereign Command, which immediately and indispensibly binds the Conscience of every Christian to the practice of it.

Remarkable is that Text to this purpose, *Rom. 12. 2. And be not conformed to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God.* Here you find this Duty, not only associated with, but made the very end of our Non-conformity to the World, and renovation of our minds, the very things which constitute a Christian.

And to sweeten our pains in this work, that Will of God, for the discovery whereof we search, is presented to us under three illustrious and alluring properties, *viz. Good, Acceptable, and Perfect.* *Good* it must needs be, because the Will and Essence of God, the chief Good, are not two things, but one and the same. And *Perfect* it must needs be, because it is the Beam and Standard, by which the Actions of all reasonable Creatures ought to be weighed and tryed, as to the moral good or evil of them. And being both good and perfect, How can it chuse but, upon both accounts, be highly *Acceptable* and grateful to an upright Soul, as that *Epithete* *ευαρεσκ* there imports. *Search the Scriptures*, saith Christ, *Joh. 5. 39. To the Law and to the Testimony*, saith the Prophet, *Isa. 8. 20.* This is not matter of meer Christian Liberty, but Com-manded Duty; and at our peril be it if we neglect it.

*Consideration II.*

No act of ours can be good and acceptable to the Lord, further than it is agreeable to his Will revealed in the Word.

No Man can be a Rule to himself. He can be no more his own *Rule* than his own *End*. One Man cannot be a Rule to another. The best of Men, and their Actions, and Examples, are only so far a rule of Imitation to us, as they themselves are ruled by the Divine revealed Will, *1 Cor. 11. 1.* uncommanded acts of Worship are abominable to God, and highly dangerous to our selves; they kindle the fire of his jealousy to the ruin and destruction of the presumptuous Sinner, *Levit. 10. 1, 2.* So that if the beauty and excellency of the Will of God be not enough to allure us, the danger of acting without the knowledg of it may justly terrify us.

*Consideration III.*

In this Duty we tread in the Footsteps of the wisest and holiest Men that ever went to Heaven before us.

It is not only the Characteristical note of a good Man, *Psal. 1. 2.* but it has been the constant practise of the most eminent believers in all Ages. The greatest *Prophets*, that had this advantage of us, that they were the Organs or inspired instruments of discovering the Will of God to others, yet were not excused

from, neither did they neglect to search it diligently themselves, *1 Pet. i. 10, 11. Daniel*, that great favourite of Heaven, who had the Visions and Revelations of God; yet he himself diligently searched the written Word, in order to the discovery of the Mind of God, *Dan. 9. 2.*

#### *Consideration IV.*

Every discovery of the Will of God by fervent Prayer, diligent and impartial search of the Scriptures, and all other allowed helps, gives the highest pleasure the mind of Man is capable of in this World.

If *Archimedes*, upon the discovery of a Mathematical Truth, was so transported and ravished, that he cried out, *Ευρηκα, Ευρηκα, I have found it, I have found it*; what pleasure then must the investigation and discovery of a Divine Truth give to a sanctified Soul! *Thy words were found of me (saith Jeremiah) and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoycing of my heart, Jer. 15. 16.* as pleasant food to a Famished Man; for now Conscience is quieted, comforted, and cheered in the way of Duty. A Man walks not at adventure with God, as that word signifies, *Levit. 26. 40, 41.*  
but

but hath the pleasant directive light of the Word and Will of God, shining sweetly upon the path of his Duty.

*Consideration V.*

By this means you shall find your Faith greatly confirmed in the truth of the Scriptures.

The sweet consent, and beautiful harmony of all the parts of the written Word, is a great Argument of its Divinity; and this you will clearly discern, when by a due search you shall find things that lye at the remotest distance, to conspire and consent in one, and one part casting light, as well as adding strength, to another. Thus you shall find *Vetus Testamentum in novo revelatum, & novum in vetere velatum.* The *New Testament* veiled in the *Old*, and the *Old* revealed in the *New*; And that such a consent of things, so distant in time and place, can never be the project and invention of Man.

*Consideration VI.*

The diligent and impartial search and inquiry after the Will of God, out of no other design than to please him in the whole course of our Duties, will turn to

us for a testimony of the integrity and sincerity of our hearts.

*Thy word (said David) have I hid in my heart, that I might not sin against thee:* And God will not hide his Will from those that thus seek to know it. If Men would apply themselves to search the Word by fervent Prayer, and fixed Meditations, upon so pure a design, not bringing their prejudiced or prepossessed minds unto it; the Spirit of the Lord would guide them into all Truth, and keep them out of dangerous and destructive Errors.

#### *Fourth Cause.*

Besides the slothfulness of the mind, there is found in many Persons another evil Disposition preparing them easily to receive Erroneous Impressions; namely, the *INSTABILITT* and Fickleness of the Judgment, and Unsettledness of mind about the Truth of the Gospel.

Of this the Apostle warns us, *Eph. 4. 14. That we henceforth be no more Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of Doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive.* None are so constant and steady in the profession of the

the Truth, as those that are fully convinced of, and well satisfied with the grounds of it. Every Professor, like every Ship at Sea, should have an *Idov sneuyon*, a ballast and steadiness of his own, 2 Pet. 3. 17. ready and prepared to render a reason of the hope that is in him, 1 Pet. 3. 15. able upon all occasions to give an account of those inward motives which constrained his assent to the Truth.

He that professeth a Truth ignorantly, cannot be rationally supposed to adhere to it constantly. He that is but half convinced of a truth, when he engages in the profession of it, must needs be *διψυχος*, a double-minded Man, as the Apostle calls him, Jam. 1. 8. half the mind hangs one way, and half another, and so it is easily moveable this way or that, with the least breath of temptation. And hence it comes to pass they are so often at a loss about their Duty and their Practice; for *Animi volutatio pendentem reddit vitam*. A doubtful Mind must needs make a staggering and uncertain Practice.

Erroneous Teachers are called wandering Stars, Jude 13. which keep no certain course as the fixed Stars do, but are sometimes nearer and sometimes remoter one from another. Thus Ex-  
vrorists



*varists*, first imbibe unsettling Opinions, and then discover them in their inconstant Practises. *Bernius* wrote a Book *de Apostasia Sanctorum*, and soon after turned *Papist*. The *Socinians* and *Libertines* teach, That a Man of any Perswasion in Religion may be saved, so that he walk not contrary to his own Light : such Doctrine directly tends to *Scepticism* in Religion.

And this *Instability* of the Judgment proceeds either from *Hypocrisie*, or *Weakness*. Sometimes from *Hypocrisie* ; All Hypocrites are διψυχοι, double-minded Men : *Jam. 4. 8.* The double-minded man (that is the *Hypocrite*) is unstable in all his ways. One of that number was not ashamed to say, *Se duas habere animas in eodem corpore, unam Deo dicatam, alteram unicuique illam vellet* : That he had two Souls in one Body, one for God, and another for whosoever would have it.

Sometimes *Instability* of the mind is the effect only of *Weakness* in the Judgment, proceeding merely from want of age and growth in Christ, not having as yet attained Senses exercised to discern both good and evil, *Heb. 5. 14.* they are but Children in Christ, and Children are easie and credulous Creatures, *Eph. 4.*

14. presently taken with a new Toy, and as soon weary of it; such a wavering and instable temper invites temptation, and falls an easie prey into its hands.

I confess some Cases may happen, where the Pretences on both sides may be so fair, as to put a judicious Christian to a stand what to chuse; but then their deliberation will be answerable, and then they will not change their Opinions every month, as *Scepticks* do. Wherever *Error* finds such a mutable disposition, its work is half done before it make one assault. How many wavering Professors at this day lie in Temptation's way? and how great a harvest have *Errorists* and *Hereticks* had among them? There's not a *Mountebank* comes upon the Stage, but he shall find ten times more Customers for his *Druggs*, than the most Learned and Experienced *Physician*. The giddy-headed Multitude have more regard to Novelty, than Truth.

*The Remedies.*

How necessary and desirable are some effectual *Rules* and *Remedies* in this Case! O what a mercy would it be to the Professors of these days, to have their Minds fixed, and their Judgments settled in the Truths of Christ! Happy is that man  
whose

whole Judgment is so guarded, that no dangerous Error or Heresie can commit a Rape upon it: To this end I shall here commend the four following *Rules* to prevent this vertigenous malady in the heads of Christians.

*Rule I.*

Look warily to it that you get a real inward implantation into Christ, and lay the foundation deep and firm in a due and serious deliberation of Religion whenever you engage in the publick profession of it.

To this sense sound the Apostle's words, *Col. 2. 6, 7. As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith, as you have been taught. Fertility and stability in Christ, a pair of inestimable Blessings, depend upon a good rooting of the Soul in him at first. He that thrusts a dead stick into the ground, may easily pull it up again, but so he cannot do by a well-rooted Tree. A colour raised by violent action, or a great fire, soon dies away; but that which is natural or constitutional will hold. Every thing is as its foundation is. 'Twas want of a good root and due depth of earth which soon turned the*  
green

green Corn into dry stubble, *Matt. 13. 21.*

*Rule II.*

Labour after an inward experimental taste of all those Truths which you profess.

This will preserve your minds from wavering and hesitation about the certainty and reality of them. We will not easily part with those Truths, which have sensibly shed down their sweet influences upon our hearts, *Heb. 10. 34.* No Sophister can easily persuade a man that hath tasted the sweetness of Honey, that it is a bitter and unpleasant thing: *Non est disputandum de gustu:* you cannot easily persuade a man out of his Senses.

*Rule III.*

Study hard and pray earnestly for satisfaction in the present Truths; *2 Pet. 1. 12. That you may be established ἐν τῇ παρῶν ἀληθείᾳ, in the truth that now is under opposition and controversy.* Be not ignorant of the Truths that lie in present hazard.

Antiquated Opinions that are more abstracted from our present Interest, are no tryals of the soundness of our Judgments, and integrity of our Hearts, as the controversies and conflicts of the present

sent Times are. Every Truth hath its time to come upon the stage, and enter the lists; some in one Age, and some in another; but Providence seems to have cast the lot of your Nativity for the honour and defence of those Truths, with which Error is struggling and conflicting in your time.

*Rule IV.*

Lastly, Be thoroughly sensible of the benefit and good of establishment, and of the evil and danger of a wavering Mind and Judgment.

*Be not carried about with divers and strange Doctrines* (saith the Apostle) *for it is a good thing that the heart be established, &c.* Heb. 13. 9. Established Souls are the honour of Truth. It was the honour of Religion in the primitive days, that when the *Heathens* would proverbially express an Impossibility, they used to say, *You may as soon turn a Christian from Christ, as do it.*

The Fickleness of Professors is a stumbling-block to the World. They'l say as *Cato* of the Civil Wars betwixt *Cæsar* and *Pompey*, *quem fugiam, video, quem sequar, non video*: they know whom to avoid, but not whom to follow. And as the

the honour of Truth, so the flourishing of your own Souls depends on it. A Tree often removed from one Soil to another, can never be expected to be fruitful, 'tis well if it make a shift to live.

*Fifth Cause.*

Another inward Cause disposing men to receive Erroneous Impressions, is an unreasonable *EAGERNESS* to snatch at any Doctrine or Opinion that promises ease to an anxious Conscience.

Men that are under the frights and terrours of Conscience, are willing to listen to any thing that offers present relief. Of all the Troubles in the World, those of the Mind and Conscience are most intolerable. And those that are in pain are glad of ease, and readily catch at any thing that seems to offer it.

This seems to be the thing which led those poor distressed Wretches, intimidated *Micah 6. 6.* into their gross Mistakes and Errors about the method of the remission of their Sins. *Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow my self before the high God? shall I come before him with Burnt-offerings, with Calves of a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousand of Rams, or with ten thousand of Rivers*  
of

of Oyl? Shall I give my First-born for my Transgression, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? They were ready to purchase inward peace, and buy out their pardon at any rate. Nothing but the twinges of Conscience could have extorted these things from them. Great is the efficacy and torment of a guilty Conscience.

Satan, who feels more of this in himself than any other Creature in the World, and knows how ready poor ignorant, but distressed Sinners, are to catch at any thing that looks like ease or comfort, and being jealous what these troubles of Conscience may issue into, prepares for them such Erroneous Doctrines and Opinions under the names of *Anodines* and quieting *Recipe's*, by swallowing of which they feel some present ease; but their Disease is thereby made so much the more incurable.

\* Mr. Gataker, in his Book against Saltmarsh, p. 27. tells us of one that had taken ill Courses, and being under much trouble of mind, could not be quiet till he turned Papist, and had been striven and assailed by a Priest.

\* 'Tis upon this account he hath found such vent in the World for his *Penances*, *Pilgrimages* and *Indulgences* among the *Papists*. But seeing this Ware will not go off among the Reformed and more enlightned Professors

feffors of Christianity, he changeth his hand, and fitteth other Doses under other names to quiet sick and distressed Souls, before ever their frights of Conscience come to settle into true Repentance and Faith in the Blood of Christ, by dressing up, and presenting to them such Opinions as these, *viz.*

That they may boldly apply to themselves all the Promises of pardon and peace, without any respect at all to Repentance or Faith in themselves; that it is not at all needful, nay, that it is illegal and sinful to have any respect to these things, forasmuch as their Sins were pardoned, and they justified from Eternity; and that the Covenant of Grace is in all respects absolute, and is made to Sinners as Sinners, without any regard to their Faith or Repentance; and whatever Sins there be in them, God sees them not. †

† Salt-marsh, in

*the Title-page of his Book called Free-grace, shews you the Sovereign vertue of Antinomian Principles, to quiet Troubles of Conscience of 12 years growth.*

To such a Charm of Troubles as this, how earnestly doth the Ear of a distressed Conscience listen? how greedily doth it suck in such pleasing words? Are all  
F Sins



Sins that are pardoned, pardoned before they are committed? and does the Covenant of Grace require neither Repentance nor Faith antecedently to the application of the Promises? how groundless then are all my Fears and Troubles? This, like a Dose of *Opium*, quiets, or rather stupifies the raging Conscience: for even an Error in Judgment, till it be detected and discovered to be so, quiets and comforts the heart, as well as principles of Truth; but whenever the fallacy shall be detected, whether here or hereafter, the anguish of Conscience must be increased, or (which is worse) left desperate.

*The Remedies.*

To prevent and cure this mistake and error in the Soul, by which it is fitted and prepared to catch any Erroneous Principle (which is but plausible) for its present relief and ease, I shall desire my Reader seriously to ponder and consider the following *Queries* upon this Case.

*Query I.*

Whether by the vote of the whole Rational World, a good Trouble be not better

ter than a false Peace? Present ease is desirable, but eternal safety is much more so : and if these two cannot consist under the present Circumstances of the Soul, Whether it be not better to endure for a time these painful pangs, than feel more acute and eternal ones, by quieting Conscience with false Remedies before the time?

'Tis bad to lie tossing a few days under a laborious *Fever*; but far worse to have that Fever turned into a *Lethargy* or fatal *Apoplexy*. Erroneous Principles may rid the Soul of its present pain, and eternal hopes and safety together. Acute pains are better than a senseless stupidity. Though the present rage of Conscience be not a right and kindly conviction, yet it may lead to it, and terminate in faith and union with Christ at last, if Satan do not this way practice upon it, and quench it before its time.

*Query II.*

Bethink your selves seriously, Whether Troubles so quieted and laid asleep, will not revive and turn again upon thee with a double force, as soon as the virtue of the Drug (I mean the Erroneous Principle) hath spent it self?

The efficacy of Truth is eternal, and will maintain the peace it gives, for ever; but all delusions must vanish, and the Troubles which they damm'd up for a time, break out with a greater force. Satan employs two sorts of *Witches*. Some to torment the Bodies of Men with grievous pain and anguish: but then he hath his *White-Witches* at hand to relieve and ease them. And have these poor Wretches any great cause (think you) to boast of the cure, who are eased of their pains at the price of their Souls?

Much like unto this, are the cures of inward Troubles by Erroneous Principles. I lament the Case of blinded *Papists*, who by *Pilgrimages*, and *Offerings* to the *Shrines* of *Titular Saints*, attempt the cure of a lesser Sin by committing a greater. Is it because there is not a God in *Israel*, who is able in due season to pacify Conscience with proper and durable Gospel-Remedies, that we suffer our Troubles thus to precipitate us into the Snares of Satan for the sake of present ease?

### *Query* III.

Read the Scriptures, and inquire whether God's People, who have lain long  
under

under sharp inward Terrors, have not at last found settlement and inward peace by those very Methods, which the Principles that quiet you, do utterly exclude?

If you will fetch your Peace from a groundless Notion, that your Sins were pardoned, and your Persons justified from all eternity, and therefore you may apply boldly and confidently to your selves the choicest Promises and Privileges in the Gospel, without any regard to Faith or Repentance wrought by the Spirit in your Souls: I am sure holy *David* took another Course for the settlement of his Conscience, *Psal.* 51. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10. And it hath been the constant practise of the *Saints* in all Ages, to clear their Title to the Righteousness of Christ wrought without them, by the Works of his Spirit wrought within them.

*Sixth Cause.*

The next Evil Temper in the Subject, preparing and disposing it for Error, is an easie *CREDULITY*, or sequacious humour in men, rendring them apt to receive things upon trust from others, without due and thorough examination of the grounds and Reasons of them, themselves.

This is a disposition fitted to receive any impression Seducers please to make upon them : they are said to deceive the hearts of the simple, ἀγνων, *i. e.* credulous, but well-meaning People that suspect no harm. 'Tis said, *Prov. 14. 15. the simple believeth every word.* Through this Sluce or Floodgate, what a multitude of *Errors* in *Popery* have overflowed the People ! They are told, they are not able to judge for themselves, but must take the matters of their Salvation upon trust from their Spiritual Guides; and so the silly People are easily seduced, and made easily receptive of the grossest Absurdities their ignorant Leaders please to impose upon them.

And it were to be wished, That those two Points, *viz. Ministrorum muta officia, & populi ceca obsequia*, the dumb Services of their Ministers, and the blind Obedience of the People had stay'd within the *Popish* Confines. But alas, alas ! how many simple *Protestants* be there, who may be said to carry their Brains in other mens Heads ? and like silly Sheep follow the next in the tract before them ; especially if their Leaders have but wit and art enough to hide their *Errors* under specious and plausible Pretences. How many

many poisonous Drugs hath Satan put off under the gilded Titles of *Antiquity, Zeal for God, higher attainments in godliness, new Lights?* &c. How natural is it for men to follow in the Tract, and be tenacious of the Principles and Practises of their Progenitors? Multitudes seem to hold their Opinions *Jure Hereditario*, by an Hereditary Right, as if their Faith descended to them the same way their Estates do.

The *Emperour of Morocco* told *King John's Ambassadour*, That he had lately read *St. Paul's Epistles*; And truly (said he) *were I now to chuse my Religion, I would embrace Christianity before any Religion in the World: but every man ought to dye in that Religion he received from his Ancestors.*

Many honest, well-meaning, but weak Christians, are also easily beguiled by specious pretences of new Light, and higher attainments in Reformation. This makes the weaker sorts of Christians pliable to many dangerous *Errors* cunningly insinuated under such taking Titles. What are most of the Erroneous Opinions now vogued in the World, but old *Errors* under new Names and Titles?

*The Remedies.*

The *Remedies* and *Preventions* in this Case are such as follow.

*Remedy I.*

'Tis beneath a man to profess any Opinion to be his own, whilst the grounds and reasons of it are in other mens keeping, and wholly unknown to himself.

If a man may tell *Gold* after his Father; then sure he may and ought to try and examine Doctrines and Points of Faith after him. We are commanded to be ready to give an account of the hope that is in us, and not to say, this or that is my Judgment or Opinion, but let others give an account of the ground and reason of it.

I confess, if he that leads me into an *Error* were alone exposed to the hazard, and I quit and free, whatever become of him; it were quite another thing. But when our Saviour tells us, *Matth. 15. 14.* that *both* (that is, the Follower as well as the Leader) *fall into the ditch*; at my peril be it if I follow without eyes of my own. That's but a weak building that is shored up by a prop from a Neighbour's Wall. How many men have ruined their Estates by Suretiship for others? but of all Suretiship none so dangerous  
as

as spiritual Suretiship. *We neither ought* (as a late Worthy speaks) *to defy the Judgment of the weakest, nor yet on the other side to deify the Judgment of the strongest Christian.* He that pins his Faith upon another man's Sleeve, knows not whither he will cary it.

*Remedy II.*

As you ought not to abuse your Christian Privilege and Liberty to try all things, 1 *Theff.* 5. 21. so neither on the other side to undervalue, or part with it. See the things that so much concern your eternal peace with your own eyes.

I shewed you before, this Liberty is abused by extending it too far; and under the notion of proving all things, many embolden themselves to innovate and entertain any thing: yet beware of bartering such a precious Privilege for the fairest Promises others can make in lieu of it. I would not slight nor undervalue the Piety and Learning of others, nor yet put out my own eyes to see by theirs.

*Remedy III.*

Before you adventure to espouse the Opinions of others, diligently observe and mark the fruits and consequences of those



those Opinions in the Lives of the zealous Abettors and Propagators of them: *By their fruits* (saith Christ) *ye shall know them.*

When the Opinion or Doctrine naturally tends to looseness, or when it sucks and draws away all a man's zeal to maintain and diffuse it, and practical Religion thereby visibly languishes in their Conversations, 'tis time for you to make a pause, before you advance one step farther towards it.

*Seventh Cause.*

The next Evil Disposition that I shall note in the Subject, is a vain *CURIOSITY* of mind, or an itching desire to pry into things unrevealed, at least above our ability to search out and discover.

'Tis an Observation as true as ancient, *Pruritus aurium scabies Ecclesiae*, itching Ears come to a Scab upon the face of the Church. The *itch* of *Novelty* produceth the *Scab* of *Error*. Of this Disease the *Apostle* warns us, *2 Tim. 4. 3. For the time will come, when they will not endure sound Doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves Teachers, having itching ears. Nothing will please them but new Notions, and new modes*  
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of Language and Method, Tone and Gesture.

Sound Doctrine is the only substantial and solid food that nourishes and strengthens the heart of the new Creature: but vain *Scepticks* nauseate and despise this as trite, vulgar, cheap and low. Nothing humours them but Novelties and Rarities: their unsetled Brains must be wheel'd about, διδασκαίς ποικίλαις καὶ ξέναις, with *divers and strange Doctrines*, *Heb.* 13. 9. Novelty and Variety are the only properties that commend Doctrines to wanton Palates. Hence it is they so boldly intrude into things they have not seen, *Col.* 2. 18. These *Cyril* fitly calls τῶν πολλῶν κρυβέσθαι, the domineerings, or darings of bold Spirits.

The *Schoolmen* have filled the World with a thousand ungrounded Fancies, as the distinct Offices and Orders of *Angels*; and higher flights of fancy than these, which seem to be invented for no other end or use, but to please the itching Ears of the Curious.

There is not only a *vesana temeritas Genethliacorum*, a wild and daring rashness of *Astrologers*, presuming to foretel Futurities, and the Fates of *Kingdoms*, as well as particular Persons, from the  
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conjunctions and influences of the *Stars*; but there is also found as high a presumption and boldness among men in matters of Religion.

*Satan* is well aware of this humour in men, and how exceeding serviceable it is to his Design; and therefore having the very knack of clawing and pleasing itching Ears with taking-*Novelties*, he is never wanting to feed their minds with a pleasing variety, and fresh succession of them: new Opinions are still invented and minted, in which the dangerous Hooks of *Error* are hid. If men were once cured of this spiritual itch, and their minds reduced to that temper and sobriety, as to be pleased with, and bless God for the plain revealed Truths of the Gospel; *Satan* would drive but a poor Trade, and find but few Customers for his Erroneous *Novelties*.

### *The Remedies.*

The proper *Remedies* to cure this itch after Novelty, or dangerous *Curiosity* of the mind, are

#### *Remedy I.*

Due Reflection upon the manifold mischiefs that have entered into the World this way. It

It was this Curiosity and desire to know, that overthrew our first Parents, *Gen. 3. 6. When the Woman saw that the Tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a Tree to be desired to make one wise; she took of the fruit thereof.* The very same way by which he let in the first Error, he hath let thousands into the World since that day. Nothing is more common in the World, than for an old Error to obtain afresh under the name of new Light. Satan hath the very art of turkening stale Errors after the mode of the present times, and make them currant and passable, as new Discoveries and rare Novelties.

Thus he puts off *Libertinism*, the old Sin of the World, under the Title of *Christian Liberty*. What a Troop of *Pagan* Idolatrous Rites were by this means introduced among the *Papists*? A great part of *Popery* is but *Ethnicismus redivivus*, *Heathenism* revived. The *Pagans Pontifex Maximus* was revived under the new Title of *Pope*. The *Gentiles Lustrations*, in the *Popish Holy-water*. Their *Novendiale sacrum*, or Sacrifice nine days after the burial of the Party, in the *Popish Masses* for the dead. Their *Alvarium Fratrum*, in Cloisters of Monks and Fryars. Their

Their *Enchanters*, in *Popish Exorcists*. Their *Asyla*, in *Popish Sanctuaries*. With multitudes more of *Pagan Rites* quite out of date in *Christendom*, introduced again under new names in *Popery* ; as was intimated *Rev.* 11. 2. and *Rev.* 13. 15.

*Remedy II.*

Quod nef-  
ciatur sine  
crimine,  
ne discu-  
tiatur  
cum dif-  
crimine.

Be satisfied that God hath not left his People to seek their Salvation, or spiritual subsistence, among curious, abstruse and doubtful Notions ; but in the great, solid, and plainly revealed Truths of the Gospel. *John* 17. 3. *This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. In facili & absoluto stat eternitas :* the great Concerns of our Salvation are plain and easie to be understood.

*Remedy III.*

Vain *Curiosity* is a dangerous Snare of *Satan*. By such trifles as these, he devours our time, eats up our strength, and diverts our minds from the necessary and most important business of Religion. Whilst we immerse our thoughts in these pleasing, but barren Contemplations, Heart-work, Closet-work, Family-work, lie by neglected. Whilst we are employ-  
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ed in garnishing the Dish with Flowers, and curious Figures, the cunning Cheat takes away the meat our Souls, should subsist by.

*Eighth Cause.*

*Pride and Arrogancy of HUMANE REASON*, is another Evil Disposition, molding and preparing the mind for *Errors*. When men are once conceited of the strength and perspicacity of their own carnal Reasons and Apprehensions, nothing is more usual than for such men to run mad with Reason into a thousand Mistakes and Errors. To this cause *Ecclesiastical Historians* ascribe the Errors that infest the Church. \*

\* Deindè,  
& huma-

næ rationis sapientia quæ religioni plurimum semper nocuit, seu Philosophia, non paucas ex sese produxit hæreses. Námque eo tempore Philosophica studia maximè vigeant; & suis argutiis, seu (ut ipsi putabant) demonstrationibus, in suâ sententiâ ita confirmati erant: ut nihil verum existimarent, quod ab eorum conceptis jamdudum opinionibus discreparet. *Magdeb. in Cent. 2. cap. 5. pag. 56.*

*Reason* indeed is the highest natural excellency of man: it exalts him above all Earthly Creatures, and in its primitive perfection almost equalized him with Angels, *Heb. 2. 7.* The Pleasures which result from its exercises and experiments,

riments, transcend all the delights and pleasures of sense. How common is it for men to dote upon their own intellectual beauty, and glory in their victories over weaker Understandings? And tho the reason of fallen Man is greatly wounded and weakened by Sin ; yet it conceits it self to be as strong and clear as ever ; and with *Sampson*, when his Locks were shorn, goes forth as before time, being neither sensible of its own weakness, or of the mysterious and unsearchable depths of Scripture.

*Reason* is our *Arbiter* and Guide by the institution and Law of Nature, in civil and natural Affairs : 'tis the beam and standard at which we weigh them. It is an home-born Judge and King in the Soul : Faith comes in as a stranger to Nature, and so it is dealt with, even as an Intruder into Reason's Province, just as the *Sodomites* dealt with *Lot*. It refuseth to be an Underling to Faith. Out of this Arrogancy of carnal *Reason*, as from *Pandora's Box*, swarms of *Errors* are flown abroad into the World.

By this means *Socinianism* first started, and hath since propagated it self. They look upon it as a ridiculous and unaccountable thing to reason, that the *Son* should

should be co-equal and co-eternal with the *Father*: that God should forgive sins freely, and yet forgive none but upon full satisfaction. That Christ should make that satisfaction by his Sufferings, and yet be *pars laesa*, the Party offended, and so make satisfaction to himself: with many more of the like stamp.

Yea, *Atheism*, as well as *Socinianism*, are births from this Womb. 'Tis proud and carnal Reason which quarrels at the Creation of the World, and seems to triumph in its uncontrollable *Maxim*, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, out of nothing comes nothing. It looks upon the Doctrine of the *Resurrection* with a deriding smile, as a thing incredible. It thinks it hard and harsh that God should command men to turn themselves to him, and threaten them with damnation in case of refusal; and yet at the same time man should not have in himself a sufficient power, and a free will to do this, without the supernatural and preventing Grace of God. It thinks it a ridiculous thing for such a great and solemn Ordinance of God as *Baptism* is, to pass upon such a Subject as an *Infant* of a week old, which is not capable to understand the Ends and Uses of it. Hence it is some over-heated Zealots



Mr. Samuel  
Clark's  
Golden  
Apples.  
p. 149.

lots have not stuck to say, That we have as good warrant and reason to baptize *Cats, Dogs and Horses*, as we have to baptize Infants. Oh the madness of Carnal Reason !

*The Remedies.*

To take down the Arrogance, and prevent the mischief of Carnal Reasonings, let us be convinced,

*Remedy I.*

That it is the will of God, that Reason in all Believers should resign to Faith, and all *Ratiocination* submit to *Revelation*.

Reason is no better than an Usurper, when it presumes to arbitrate matters belonging to Faith and Revelation. \* Reason's proper place is to sit at the feet of Faith, and instead of searching the secret grounds and reasons, to adore and admire the great and unsearchable Mysteries of the

\* Man having sinned by pride, the wisdom of God humbles him at the very root of the Tree of Knowledge, and makes him deny his own Understanding, and submit to Faith; or else for ever to lose his desired Felicity. *Laud against Fisher, p. 5.*

Gospel. None of God's works are *unreasonable*, but many of them are *above Reason*. It was as truly, as ingenuously said by one; *Never doth Reason shew it self*

*self more reasonable, than when it ceaseth to reason about things that are above Reason. Where is the Wise ? where is the Scribe ? where is the Disputer of this World ? hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this World ? For after that, in the wisdom of God, the World by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe, 1 Cor. 1. 20, 21. 'Tis not Reason, but Faith that must save us.*

The Wisdom of God in the Gospel, is wisdom in a Mystery, even hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the World unto our glory, 1 Cor. 2. 7. Such wisdom as the most Eagle-eyed *Rationalists* and famed *Philosophers* of the World understood not. *Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entred into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them to us by his spirit, ibid. vers. 9, 10.*

### Remedy II.

Be convinced of the weakness and deep corruption of natural Reason, and this will restrain its Arrogance, and make it modest and wary.

A convinced and renewed Soul is conscious to it self of its own weakness and blindness, and therefore dares not pry audaciously into the *Arcana Cæli*, nor summon the great God to its bar. It finds it self posed by the Mysteries of Nature, and therefore concludes it self an incompetent Judge of the Mysteries of Faith.

The Arrogancy of *Reason* is the reigning Sin of the Unregenerate, though it be a Disease with which the Regenerate themselves are infected. When Conviction shall do its work upon the Soul, the Plumes of spiritual pride quickly fall; and it saith with *Job*: *Once have I spoken, but I will speak no more; yea, twice, but I will proceed no further.* q. d. I have done, Father, I have done; *I have uttered things that I understood not,* Job 42. 3. Spiritual Illumination cures this Ambition.

### *Remedy III.*

Consider the manifold Mischiefs and Evils flowing from the pride of *Reason*.

It doth not only fill the World with Errors and Distractions; but it also invades the Rights of Heaven, and casts a vile reflection upon the *Wisdom, Sovereignty* and *Veracity* of God. It lifts up  
it

it self against his *Wisdom*, not considering that *the foolishness of God is wiser than men*, 1 Cor. 1. 25. It spurns at his glorious *Sovereignty*, not considering that *he giveth no account of his matters*, Job 33. 13. It questions his *Veracity*, in saying with *Nicodemus*, *How can these things be?* Joh. 3. 9.

*Cause IX.*

The last Evil Disposition I shall here take notice of in the *Subject*, is rash and ignorant *ZEAL*; a temper preparing the mind both to propagate furiously, and receive easily Erroneous Doctrines and Opinions.

When there is in the Soul more heat than light; when a fervent Spirit is governed by a weak Head, such a temper of Spirit *Satan* desires, and singles out as fittest for his purpose, especially when the Heart is graceless, as well as the Understanding weak. A blind *Horse* of an high mettle will carry the Rider into any Pit, and venture over the most dangerous Precipices.

Such were the Superstitious *Jewish Zealots*: they had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. This *κεκαυνη* *blind zeal*, St. Paul charges justly upon

the *Jewish Bigots*, Rom. 10. 2. as the proper cause of their dangerous Errors about the great point of *Justification*: and surely no man understood the evil of it more than he, who in his unregenerate state was transported by it to the most furious persecution of the *Saints*, *Acts* 26. 11. and even to dotage, and extreme fondness upon the Erroneous Traditions of his Fathers, *Gal.* 1. 14.

Blind *Zeal* is a Sword in a Mad-man's hand. No Persecutor to a Conscientious one, whose Erroneous Conscience offers up the blood of the Saints to the glory of God, *Job.* 16. 2. The blind, but zealous *Pharisees* would compass Sea and Land to make one *Profelyte*, *Matth.* 23. 15. as our *Modern Pharisees*, the *Jesuits*, have since done, who have mingled themselves with the remotest and most barbarous *Nations*, to draw them to the *Romish Error*. Of the same temper were the false Teachers taxed by the Apostle, *Gal.* 4. 17. they zealously affect you, but not well: yea, they would exclude you (*viz.* from our Society and Ordinances) that you might affect them.

And as it is the great Instrument by which *Satan* propagates *Errors*, so it makes a fit temper in the Souls of the People

People to receive them. For by this means *Error* gains the possession of the Affections, without passing a previous and due test by the Understanding, and so gains the Soul by the advantage of a Surprise. Every thing, by how much the more weak and ignoble it is, by so much the more it watcheth upon Surprisals and Advantages. *Error* cares not to endure the due examination and test of Reason; and therefore seeks to gain by surprisal, what it despairs of ever gaining by a plain and fair tryal.

There be few *Errorists* in the World of *Alexander's* mind, who would rather lose the day, than steal the Victory. Hence it comes to pass, that the greatest number of those they lead Captives, are silly *Women*, as the *Apostle* speaks, who are the most affectionate, but least judicious Sex.

From this *blind Zeal* it is, that they cunningly wind their Erroneous Opinions into all their Discourses, where they have any hope to prevail. A rational and modest Contradiction puts them into a flame, it breaks the nearest bonds of Friendship and Society.

*Rabshakeh* in 2 *King.* 18. would not treat with *Hezekiah's* Counsellors of State,

but with the common People upon the Wall: and Error cares not to treat with sound Reason, able to sift it through the Scripture-search, but with the Affections; as well knowing, it is in vain to make war in Reason's Territories, without first gaining a party among the Affections.

*The Remedies.*

The best *Defensatives* against Erroneous Contagions in this case, are to be found in the following Particulars.

*Defensive I.*

Reflect seriously and sadly upon the manifold Mischiefs occasioned everywhere, and in all Ages of the World, by rash Zeal.

Revolve Church-histories, and you shall find, that scarce any cruel Persecution hath flamed in the World, which hath not been kindled by blind Zeal. Turn over all the Records, both of *Pagan* and *Popish* Persecutions, and you shall still find these two Observations confirmed and verified.

*First*, That ignorant Zeal hath kindled the fires of Persecution; and *secondly*, That the more zealous any have been for  
the

the ways of *Error* and Falshood, still the more implacably fierce and cruel they have been to the sincere Servants of God. None like a Superstitious *Devoto* to manage the Devil's work of Persecution throughly, and to purpose. They'l rush violently and head-long into the blood of their dearest Relations, or most eminent Saints, to whose sides the Devil sets this sharp Spur. Superstitious Zeal draws all the strength and power of the Soul into that one Design; and wo to him that stands in the way of such a man, if God interpose not betwixt him and the stroke. It was a rational wish of him that said, *Liberet me Deus ab homine unius tantum negotii*, God deliver me from a man of one only Design.

Now consider, Reader, if thy judgment be *weak*, and thy affections *warm*, how much thou liest exposed, not only to *Errors* which may ruine thy self, but also to Tongue and Hand-persecution, wherein *Satan* may manage thy zeal for the injury or ruine of those that are better than thy self: And withal consider, how many dreadful threatnings are found in Scripture against the instruments of Persecution, so employed and managed by Satan.

Certainly,



Certainly, Reader, it were better for thee to stand with thy naked breast before the mouth of a discharging Cannon, than that thy Soul should stand under this guilt, before such a Scripture-threatening as that, *Psal. 7. 13. He hath also prepared for him the instruments of death; he ordaineth his Arrows against the persecutors.* And none more likely to become such, than those of thine own temper and complexion; especially if grace be wanting in the heart, whilst Zeal for erroneous Principles eats up the Affections.

*Second Defensive.*

Consider what mischief zeal for an *Error* will do thine own Soul, as well as others.

It will wholly ingross thy time, thoughts and strength; so that if there be any gracious principle in thee, it shall not be able to thrive and prosper: For look, as a *Fever* takes off the natural appetite from Food, so will erroneous Zeal take off thy Spiritual Appetite from Meditation, Prayer, Heart-examination, and all other the most necessary and nourishing Duties of Religion, by reason whereof thy grace must languish,

When

When thy Soul, with *David's*, should be filled and feasted, as with marrow and fatness, by delightful meditations of God upon thy Bed, thou wilt be rolling in thy mind thy barren and insipid notions, which yield no food or spiritual strength to thy Soul; thou wilt lye musing how to dissolve the Arguments and Objections against thine Errors, when thou shouldst rather be employed in solving the just and weighty Objections that lye against thy sincerity and interest in Christ, which were time far better improved.

• *Third Defensative.*

Consider how baneful this inordinate zeal hath been to Christian Society, lamentably defacing, and almost dissolving it every where, to the unspeakable detriment of the Churches.

We read, *Mal. 3. 16.* of a blessed time, when they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it, and a Book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name. Oh happy time! *Halcion* days! I, my self, remember the time, when the Zeal of the Saints spent it self in provoking one another to  
Love

Love and Good Works, in joint and fervent Prayer, in inward, experimental, and edifying Communion; my Soul hath them still in remembrance, and is cast down within me: For alas! alas! how do I see every where Christian Communion turned into vain janglings? Churches and Families into meer Cock-pits? Mens Discourfings falling as naturally into contentions about trifles, as they were wont to do into Heavenly and Experimental Subjects, to the unspeakable disgrace and damage of Religion?

*Fourth Defensative.*

That Opinion is justly to be suspected for erroneous, which comes in at the Postern-door of the Affections; and not openly and fairly at the right Gate of an enlightned and well-satisfied judgment. 'Tis a Thief that cometh in at the back-door, at least strongly to be suspected for one. *Truth* Courts the *Mistress*, makes its first and fair Addresses to the Understanding. *Error* bribes the *Handmaid*, and labours first to win the Affections, that by their influence it may corrupt the Judgment.

And thus you see, besides the innocent *Occasion*, viz. *God's Permission* of  
*Errors*

*Errors* in the World, for the tryal of his people, Nine proper *Causes* of *Errors* found in the evil dispositions of the minds of Men, which prepare them to receive erroneous Doctrines and Impressions, viz.

1. A wrangling humour at the pretended *Obscurity* of Scripture.
2. The Abuse of that *Christian Liberty* purchased by Christ.
3. *Slothfulness* in searching the whole Word of God.
4. *Fickleness* and *Instability* of Judgment.
5. *Eagerness* after *Anodines* to ease a distressed *Conscience*.
6. An easy *Credulity* in following the Judgments and Examples of others.
7. Vain *Curiosity*, and prying into unrevealed Secrets.
8. The *Pride* and *Arrogancy* of *Human Reason*.
9. *Blind Zeal*, which spurs on the Soul, and runs it upon dangerous precipices.

We next come to consider the principal Impulsive *Cause*, by which *Errors* are propagated and disseminated in the World.

*Cause*

## Cause X.

Come we next in the proper order, to consider the Principal *Impulsive Cause* of *Errors*; which is *SATAN* working upon the predisposed matter he finds in the corrupt Nature of Man. \* The Centurists speaking of the strange and sudden growth of Errors and Heresies, immediately after the planting of the Gospel by Christ, and the Apostles, ascribe it to Satan.

\* Quæ quidem res abundè docet di-ram esse Diaboli malitiam: qui victus,

atq; prostratus à Christo, nihilominus ausus est ejus verbum ac totam religionis formam, teris opinionibus ac blasphemis conspurcare, lacerare, & propemodum evertere. Ut autem portenta hujus maligni spiritus in conspectu sint & quasi primæ scaturigines plurimarum hæresium, quæ postea, veluti aliis in se receptis rivis mirum in modum excreverunt, &c. *Hist. Magdeb. Cent. 1. Lib. 2. Cap. 5. p. 368.*

When Swinkfeld sent his Books to Luther, he told the Messenger, the Devil was the Author of them; and the Lord rebuke thee Satan, was the Answer he returned to them.

*Satan* is a Lyar from the beginning, and abode not in the Truth: He hates it with a deadly hatred, and all the Children and Friends of Truth. And this hatred he manifesteth sometimes by raising furious storms of persecution against the sincere Professors of it, *Rev. 3. 10.* and sometimes by Clouds of *Heresies* and *Errors*, with design to darken it. In the former he acts as a roaring *Lyon*; in the latter as a subtil *Serpent*, *2 Cor. 11. 3. I fear,*

*fear lest as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty; so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.*

He is exceeding skilful and dexterous in citing and wresting the Scriptures to serve his vile designs and purposes; and as impudently daring, as he is crafty and cunning; as appears in the History of Christ's temptation in the desert, *Matt.* 4. 6. where he cites one part of that promise, *Psal.* 91. 11. and suppresseth the rest; shows the encouragement, *viz.* *He shall give his Angels charge over thee*; but clips off the limitation of it, *viz.* *to keep thee in all thy ways: In viis, non in precipitiis*, In our lawful ways, not in rash and dangerous precipices; as *Bernard* well glosseth.

And 'tis worth observation, that he introduceth multitudes of Errors into the World, under the unsuspected notions of admirable *Prophylacticks*, and approved Preservatives from all mischiefs and dangers from himself. Under this notion, he hath neatly and covertly slid into the World, *Holy-water*, *Crossings*, *Reliques* of *Saints*, and almost innumerable other superstitious Rites.

Erroneous Teachers are the Ministers of Satan, however they transform themselves

selves into Ministers of Righteousness, 2 Cor. 11. 15. and the subtil dangerous Errors they broach, are fitly stiled by the Spirit of God, τὰ βάθη τοῦ Σατανᾶ, *the depths of Satan*, Rev. 2. 24. The corrupt Teachers, the *Gnosticks*, &c. called them Depths, *i. e.* great mysteries, high and marvellous attainments in knowledg; but the Spirit of God fits a very proper *Epithete* to them, They are Satanical depths, and Mysteries of Iniquity. Now the level and design of Satan herein is double :

*First*, He aims at the ruin and damnation of those that vent and propagate them; upon which account the Apostle calls them αἰρέσεις ἀπωλείας, 2 Pet. 2. 1. destructive, or (as we render it) damnable Heresies. And because God will preserve the Souls of his own from this mortal Contagion, therefore,

*Secondly*, He endeavours by lesser Errors to busv the minds, and check the growth of Grace in the Souls of the Saints, by employing them about things so foreign to true godliness, and the power thereof, Heb. 13. 9.

#### *The Remedies.*

The *Rules* for prevention and recovery, are these that follow :

*Rule*

*Rule I.*

Pray earnestly for a thorow change of the state and temper of thy Soul, by sound *Conversion* and *Regeneration*.

Conversion turns us from darkness to light; and from the power of Satan to God, *Acts* 26. 18. They are his own slaves and vassals that are taken captive by him at his will, *2 Tim.* 2. 16. A Sanctified heart is a Sovereign defensive against Erroneous Doctrines; it furnishes the Soul with spiritual eyes, judicious ears, and a distinguishing taste, by which it may discern both good and evil, truth and error, *Heb.* 5. 14. yea, it puts the Soul at once under the conduct of the Spirit, and protection of the Promise, *Joh.* 16. 13. and though this doth not secure a Man from all lesser mistakes, yet it effectually secures him from greater ones, which are inconsistent with Christ and Salvation.

*Rule II.*

Acquaint your selves with the *wiles* and *methods* of Satan, and be not ignorant of his *devices*, *2 Cor.* 2. 11.

When once you understand the wash and paint with which he sets off the ugly

H

ly



ly face of Error, you will not easily be enamoured with it. Pretences of Devotion upon one side, and of Purity, Zeal, and Reformation upon the other; though they be pleasant sounds to both ears, yet the wary Soul will examine, before it receive and admit Doctrinal Points under these gilded Titles. Those that have made their Observations upon the stratagems of Satan, will heedfully observe both the tendency of Doctrines, and the Lives of their Teachers; and if they find looseness, pride, wantonness in them, it is not a glorious title, or magnificent name that shall charm them. They know Satan can transform himself into an Angel of Light; and no wonder if his Ministers also be transformed into Ministers of Righteousness, 2 Cor. 11. 14, 15.

### *Rule III.*

Resign your Minds and Judgments in fervent Prayer to the Government of Christ, and Conduct of the Spirit; and in all your addresses to God, pray that he would keep them chaste and pure, and not suffer Satan to commit a rape upon them. Plead with God that part of Christ's Prayer, *John 17. 17. Sanctify them*

*Causes and Cures of Mental Errors.* 115  
*them through thy truth: thy word is truth.*

Rule IV.

Live in the conscientious and constant practice of all those Truths and Duties God hath already manifested to you.

This will bring you under that blessed Promise of Christ, *John 7. 17.* *If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.* Satan's greatest successes are amongst idle, notional, and vain Professors; not humble, serious, and practical Christians.

Cause XI.

Having considered and dispatched the several internal *Causes* of Error, found in the evil dispositions of the seduced, as also the *Impulsive Cause*, viz. *Satan*, who fits suitable baits to all these sinful humours and evil tempers of the heart; we come next to consider the *Instrumental Cause* employed by *Satan* in this work, viz. the *FALSE TEACHER*, whom *Satan* makes use of as his Seedsmen, to disseminate and scatter erroneous Doctrines and Principles into the minds of Men, Ploughed up and prepared by those evil tempers forementioned, as a fit Soil to receive them.

The choice of Instruments is a principal part of Satan's policy. Every one is not fit to be employed in such a Service as this. All are not fit to be of the Council of War, who yet take their places of Service in the Field. A *Rustick* carried out of the Field, on Board a Ship at Sea, though he never learned his Compass, nor saw a Ship before, can by another's direction tug lustily at a Rope; but he had need be an expert *Artist*, that sits at the *Helm*, and steers the course. The worst Causes need the smoothest *Orators*; and bad *Ware* a cunning *Merchant* to put

\* Subtiles it off \*.

& astutas

fuisse Montani fraudes, & quæ blandâ specie quibusvis imponere facile potuerint; indè liquet quòd totam propemodùm Scripturam suscepit; ac de Deo Patre, Filio, & Spiritu sancto, (ut *Epiphanius* scribit) eadem docuit quæ Ecclesia Christi. *Magdeb. Cent. 2. Cap. 5. p. 77. De Hæresibus sub Commodo.*

Deep-pated Men are coveted by Satari to manage this design. None like an eloquent *Tertullus* to confront a *Paul*, *Acts 24. 1.* A subtil *Escius* to enter the List in defence of the Popish Cause, against the Learned and Zealous Reformers. When the *Duke of Buckingham* undertook to Plead the bad Cause of *Richard* the third, the *Londoners* said, *They never thought it had been possible for any Man to*

Continuation of Daniel's History, p. 223.

*to deliver so much bad Matter, in such good Words, and quaint Phrases.*

The first Instrument chosen by Satan to deceive Man, was the Serpent; because that Creature was more subtil than any Beast of the Field. There is not a Man of eminent parts, but *Satan* courts and sollicites him for this service. St. *Austin* told an ingenious, but un sanctified Scholar, *Cupit abs te ornari Diabolus*, The Devil covets thy Parts to adorn his Cause. He surveys the World, and where-ever he finds more than ordinary strength of Reason, pregnancy of Wit, depth of Learning, and elegancy of Language, that is the Man he looks for.

These are the Men that can almost indiscernably sprinkle their Errors among many precious Truths, and wrap up their poisonous Drugs in Leaf-gold or Sugar. *Maresius* notes of *Crellius* and his *Accomplices*, That by the power of their Eloquence, and sophistry of their Arguments, they were able artificially to cloath horrible Blasphemies to allure the simple \*.

\* *Tectorio*  
*fucatae e-*

*loquentiae, argutisq; Sophisticis e Scriptura perniciosè detorta, ac fallaci fallentèq; ratione horrendae blasphemiae artificiosè circumvestiuntur ad inescandos simpliciores. Praefatio ad Hydr. Socin.*

\* Mr. W.  
Gurnal,  
Christian  
Armour,  
Part 2. p.  
33.

Sunt qui-  
dam vani-  
loqui, &  
mentis se-  
ductores,  
non Chri-  
stiani, sed  
Christum  
mercantes  
& caupo-  
nantes  
verbum  
Evangelii,  
qui vene-  
num Erro-  
ris com-

miscentes dulci blandimento sicut ænomeli ut qui biberit illius  
potus gustabilem sensum, dulcedine captus, inobservanter morti  
addicatur. Ignatius Epist. ad Trallianos, p. 68.

And like the *Hyena*, they can coun-  
terfeit the voices of the Shepherds, to de-  
ceive and destroy the Sheep. There is  
(saith a late \* Worthy) an *erudita nequi-*  
*tia*, a Learned kind of wickedness, a  
subtil art of deceiving the minds of o-  
thers. Upon which account the Spirit  
of God sometimes compares them, 2 *Pet.*

2. 3. to cunning and cheating *Tradef-*  
*men*, who have the very art to set a gloss  
upon their bad Wares with fine words,  
πλασῶς λόγῳ ὑμᾶς ἐμποιέουσιν, they  
buy and sell the people with their ensna-  
ring and feigned words. And sometimes  
he compares them to cunning *Gamesters*,  
that have the art and sleight of hand to  
Cog the *Die*, to deceive the unskilful,  
and win their Game, *Eph.* 4. 14. ἐν τῇ  
κωβίᾳ, &c.

And sometimes the Spirit of God  
compares them to *Witches* themselves,  
*Gal.* 3. 1. τίς ὑμᾶς ἐβόσκηκε; *foolish Ga-*  
*latians, who hath bewitched you?* How  
many strange feats have been done upon  
the bodies of Men and Women by *Witch-*  
*craft*? But far more and stranger upon  
the

the Souls of Men by the *Magick of Error*. *Jannes and Jambres* performed wonderful things in the sight of *Pharoah*, by which they deceived and hardened him; and unto these, false Teachers are compared.

Such a Man was *Elymas* the Sorcerer, who laboured to seduce the *Deputy, Sergius Paulus*, though a prudent Man, *Acts 13. 7, 8, 9, 10. Oh full of all subtilty and all mischief, thou Child of the Devil!* saith *Paul* unto him. The Art of seduction from the ways of truth and holiness, discovers a Man to be both the *Child and Scholar* of the Devil.

But as the wise and painful Ministers of Christ, who turn many to Righteousness, shall have double Glory in Heaven; so these subtil and most active Agents for the Devil, who turn many from the ways of Righteousness, will have a double portion of misery in Hell.

*The Remedies.*

The proper *Remedies* in this Case are principally two.

*Remedy I.*

Pray fervently, and labour diligently in the use of all God's appointed means,

to get more solidity of Judgment, and strength of Grace to establish you in the Truth, and secure your Souls against the cunning craftiness of Men that lye in to deceive.

'Tis the ignorance and weakness of the people, which makes the Factors for Error so successful as they are. Consult the Scriptures, and you shall find these cunning Merchants drive the quickest and gainfullest trade among the weak and injudicious. So speaks the Apostle, *With good words and fair speeches, they deceive the hearts of the simple; ἀπακτών*, harmless, weak, easie Souls, who have a desire to do well, but want wisdom to discern the subtilties of them that mean ill; who are void both of fraud in themselves, and suspicion of others. Oh! what success have the Deceivers, *χρησολογία καὶ εὐλογία*, their fair words and sugared speeches, sweet and taking expressions, among such innocent ones!

And who are they among whom Satan's cunning Gamesters commonly win the Game, and sweep the Stakes, but weak Christians, credulous Souls, whom for that reason the Apostle calls *ἡπτοί*, Children. The word properly signifies  
an

an Infant, when 'tis referred to the Age ; but unskilful and unlearned , when referred ( as it is here ) to the Mind. So again, 2 *Pet.* 2. 14. They ( that is, the False Teachers there spoken of ) beguile *ψυχὰς ἀσθεῖντας* , unstable Souls , Souls that are not confirmed and grounded in the Principles of Religion. Whence by the way, take notice of the unspeakable advantage and necessity of being well Catechized in our youth : the more judicious, the more secure.

*Remedy II.*

Labour to acquaint your selves with the sleights and artifices Satan's Factors and Instruments generally make use of, to seduce and draw Men from the Truth. The knowledg of them is a good defensive against them. Now there are two common Artifices of Seducers , which it is not safe for Christians to be ignorant of.

*First*, They usually seek to disgrace and blast the reputations of those Truths and Ministers set for their defence, which they design afterwards to overthrow and ruin ; and to beget credit and reputation to those Errors which they have a mind to introduce. How many precious truths  
of



of God are this day, and with this design defamed as legal and carnal Doctrines ; and those that defend them, as Men of an *Old Testament* spirit ?

Humiliation for Sin, Contrition of Spirit, &c. fall under disgrace with many, and indeed all qualifications and pre-requisites unto coming to Christ, as things not only needless, but pernicious unto the Souls of Men, although they have not the least dependance upon them : Yea, Faith it self, as a pre-requisite unto Justification, as no better than a Condition pertaining to *Adam's Covenant*.

And so for the persons of Orthodox Ministers ; you see into what contempt the false Teachers would have brought both the Person and Preaching of *Paul* himself, 2 Cor. 10. 10. *His bodily presence* (say they) *is weak, and his speech contemptible.*

*Secondly,* Their other common Artifice is, to insinuate their false Doctrines among many acknowledged and precious Truths, which only serve for a convenient vehicle to them ; and besides that, to make their Errors as palatable and gustful as they can to the vitiated Appetite of corrupt Nature. The forementioned Worthy hath judiciously observed  
how

how artificially Satan hath blended his baneful Doses, to please the Palate of *Carnal Reason*, *Spiritual Pride*, and the desire of *Flesbly Liberty*.

*Carnal Reason* is that great Idol, which the more intelligent part of the carnal World worships. And are not the *Socinian* Heresies as pleasant to it, as a well-mixt *Julep* to a *feverish Stomach*.

*Spiritual Pride* is another *Diana*, which obtains greatly in the World; and no Doctrine like the *Pelagian* and *Semi-pelagian* Errors, gratify it. A Doctrine that sets fallen Nature upon its Legs again, and persuades it, it can go alone to Christ; at least, with a little external help of Moral suasion, without any preventing or creating work in the Soul. This goes down glib and grateful.

And then for *Flesbly Liberty*, How do those that are fond of it rejoice in that Doctrine or Opinion, which looses Nature from the yoke of restraint? How does the poor deluded *Papist* hug himself, to think he hath liberty by his Religion, to let loose the reins of his Lust to all sensualities, and quit himself from all that guilt, by *Auricular Confession* to the Priest once a year? How doth the *Familist* smile upon that Principle of his, which

which tells him, the Gospel allows more Liberty than severe Legal Teachers think fit to tell them of : They press Repentance and Faith ; but Christ hath done all this to thy hands.

### *Cause XII.*

Having considered the several *Causes* of *Errors*, found in the evil dispositions of the seduced, as also the *impulsive* and *instrumental Causes*, namely *Satan* and *false Teachers* employed by him ; I shall next proceed to discover some special , and most successful Methods frequently used by them, to draw the minds of Men from the Truth. Amongst which, that which comes first to consideration, is the great skill they have in representing the *ABUSES* of the Ordinances of God, and Duties of Religion , by wicked Men, to scare tender and weak Consciences from the due use of them, and all further attendance upon them.

The abuse of Christ's holy Appointments are so cunningly improved to serve this design, that the minds of many well-meaning persons receive such deep disgust at them, that they are scarce ever to be reconciled to them again. A strong prejudice is apt to drive Men from one

extream upon another, as thinking they can never get far enough off from that which hath been so scaringly represented to them. Thus making good the old Observation, *Dum vitant stulti vitia, in contraria currunt*; they run from the troublesome smoak of Superstition, into the Fire of an irreligious contempt of God's Ordinances, split themselves upon *Charybdis* to avoid *Scylla*. *Ex. gra.*

The *Papists* having deeply abused the Ordinance of *Baptism*, by their corruptive mixtures and additions of the superstitious *Cross*, *Chrism*, &c. part whereof is not sufficiently purged to this day by the Reformation; and finding also multitudes of carnal *Protestants* dangerously resting upon their supposed baptismal Regeneration, to the great hazard of their Salvation; which mistake is but too much countenanced by some of its Administrators: They take from hence such deep offence at the administration of it to any Infants at all (though the Seed of God's Covenanted People) that they think they can never be sharp enough in their invectives against it; nor have they patience to hear the most rational defences of that Practise.

So, for that Scriptural Heavenly Duty of *Singing*: What more commonly alledged against it, than the abuse and ill effects of that precious Ordinance? How often is the Nonsense and Error of the common Translation, the rudeness and dulness of the Metre of some *Psalms*, as *Psal.* 7. 13. as also the cold formality, with which that Ordinance is performed by many who do but Parrotize? I say, How often are these things buz'd into the ears of the people, to alienate their hearts from so sweet and beneficial a Duty?

And very often we find it urged to the same end, how unwarrantable and dangerous a thing it is for carnal and unregenerated persons to appropriate to themselves in Singing, those Praises and Experiences which are peculiar to the Saints; not understanding, or considering that the singing of *Psalms* is an Ordinance of Christ, appointed for teaching and admonition, as well as praising, *Col.* 3. 16.

\* The Divinity of *Psalms and Hymns*, &c. \* Thus *Antinomianism* took, if not its rise, yet its encouragement from the too rigorous pressing of the Law upon convinced sinners: *Teaching and admonishing one another in*

*former ages* (saith Mr. Saltmarsh) *put but a Grain, or Drachm of Gospel, to a Pound of Law, in their Receipts for distempered Souls.* Vide Saltmarsh of *Free-grace*, p. 40. If

If Satan can prevail first with wicked Men, to corrupt and abuse God's Ordinances by the superstitious mixtures and additions; and then with good Men, to renounce and slight them for the sake of those abuses; he fully obtains his design, and gives Christ a double wound at once; one by the hand of his avowed Enemies, the other by the hands of his Friends, no less grievous than the first. First, wicked Men corrupt Christ's Ordinances; and then good Men nauseate them.

*The Remedies.*

The proper Remedies against Errors, insinuated by the abuses of Duties and Ordinances, are such as follow:

*Remedy I.*

Let Men consider, that there is nothing in Religion so great, so sacred and excellent, but some or other have greatly corrupted or vilely abused them.

What is there in the whole World more precious and excellent than the Free-grace of God? and yet you read, *Jude 4.* of some that turned the Grace of our Lord into Lasciviousness. What more desirable to Christians, than the glorious Liberty Christ hath purchased for

for them by his Blood, and settled upon them in the Gospel-Charter? A Liberty from Satan, Sin, and the rigour and Curse of the Law; and yet you read, *1 Pet. 2. 16.* of them that used this Liberty for a cloak of maliciousness. 'Tis true, Christ came to be a Sacrifice for Sin, but not a Cloak for Sin; to set us at Liberty from the Bondage of our Lusts, not from the Ties and Duties of our Obedience. Under the pretence of this Liberty it was, that the *Gnosticks*, *Carpocratians*, and the *Menandrians* of old, did not only connive at; but openly taught and practised all manner of leudness and uncleanness.

Menandriani  
omnem  
turpitudi-  
nem li-  
bentèr  
amplexi  
sunt, tan-  
quàm gra-  
tiæ Dei  
erga ho-  
mines fru-  
ctum. *Augu-  
st. Lib.  
de Hæres.*

St. *Augustin*, in his Book of *Heresy*, makes this sad complaint, The *Menandrians* (saith he) do willingly embrace all uncleanness as the fruit of the Grace of God towards Men. And not only the Liberty purchased by Christ, but the very Person and Gospel of Christ are liable to abuses; and oftentimes through the corruptions of Mens hearts, become Stones of stumbling, and Rocks of offence. What then? Shall we renounce the Grace of God, our Christian Liberty, the very Gospel, yea, and Person of Christ himself, because each of them have

have been thus vilely abused by wicked wretches? At the peril of our eternal damnation be it, if we do so. *Blessed is he (saith our Lord) that is not offended in me.* Beware, lest by this means Satan at once wound the Lord Jesus Christ by scandal, and thy Soul by prejudice.

*Remedy II.*

Consider also, that it is the nature and temper of a gracious Soul, to raise his esteem, and heighten his love to those Ordinances which are most abused and disgraced by Men.

The more they are abused and opposed by others, the higher they should be valued and honoured by us; *Psal. 119. 126, 127. It is time for thee, Lord, to work; for they have made void thy Law; therefore I love thy Commandments above gold, yea, above fine gold. q. d.* The more they are disgraced and abused by wicked men, the more do I honour and prize them. A like spirit, with *David's*, was found in *Elijah*, *1 King. 19. 14. I have been very jealous for the Lord God of Hosts; because the Children of Israel have forsaken thy Covenant, thrown down thine Altars, and slain thy Prophets with the Sword.*



A good Man will strive to honour and secure those Truths and Duties most, which he finds under most disgrace or danger. He loves the Truth sincerely, who cleaves to it, and stands by it under all opposition. This is a good tryal of the soundness of thy heart, and purity of thine ends in Religion : Such a proof, as the honour and reputation of Religion in the World can never give thee.

In *Solomon's* time the *Jews* were very cautious how they admitted and received *Profelytes*, suspecting that by-ends and worldly respects may draw men to it ; but they were not so cautelous in times of disgrace and persecution.

### *Remedy III.*

Before you part with any Ordinance or practice in Religion, bethink your selves whether you never found any spiritual blessings or advantages in that path which you are now tempted to forsake.

Had you never any spiritual meltings of your hearts and affections in that Heavenly Ordinance of *Singing* ? And may there not be now Thousands of Mercies in your possession in consequence to, and as the fruit of your solemn dedication to  
God

God in *Baptism* by your Covenanted Parents? For my own part, I do heartily and solemnly bless God for it upon this account; and so I hope Thousands besides my self have cause to do. However, such a Practice may by no means be deserted by you, because abused by others.

*Cause XIII.*

Another Method and Artifice, by which *false Teachers* draw multitudes of Disciples after them, is, by granting to their Ignorant and Ambitious Followers the *LIBERTY* of *PROPHESTING*; flattering them into a conceit of their excellent Gifts and Attainments, when God knows they had more need to be Catechised and taught the Principles of Christianity, than undertake to expound and apply those profound Mysteries unto others.

Satan hath filled the Church and World with Errors and Troubles this way. \* When ignorant and unexperienced Persons begin to think it a low and a dull thing to sit from year to year under other mens teachings, and to

\* Stultissimi atque impii homines, non intelligentes nihil contrarium in rebus iisdem ab eodem dictum fuisse, verbis tantum inhærentes. causas ipsas dictorum reliquerunt. Et diversa quidem Scripturæ dicta videntes, ad impietatem reciderunt, divinorum dictorum incapaces. *Hilarius*, Lib. I. de Trinit.

fancy that they are wiser than their Teachers; their Pride will quickly tempt them to shew their Ignorance, and that mischievous Ignorance will prove dangerous to the Truth, and troublesome to the Church. The Apostle forbids the Ordination of a *Novice*, lest he be puffed up, and fall into the condemnation of the Devil: and in *1 Tim. i. 7.* he shews us the reason why some swerved and turned aside unto vain jangling; and it was this, That *they desired to be Teachers of the Law, neither understanding what they said, nor whereof they affirmed.* That is, They affected to be Preachers, though not able to speak congruously, with tolerable sense and reason.

I do not here censure and condemn the use and exercise of the Gifts of all private Christians. There are to be found amongst them some Persons of raised parts, and answerable modesty and humility, who may be very useful, when called to service, in extraordinary Cases, by the Voice of Providence; or exercise their Gifts in a probationary way, or in due subordination unto Christ's publick Officers and Ordinances, by, and with the consent of the *Pastor*, and Congregation.

But

But when unqualified and uncalled Persons undertake such a work out of the conceit and pride of their own hearts, or are allured to it by the crafty Designs of Erroneous Teachers, partly to overthrow a publick, regular and standing Ministry in the Church, to which end the Scriptures are manifestly abused, such as *Jer.* 31. 34. *Rom.* 12. 6. *1 Cor.* 14. *1 Pet.* 4. 10. with many others; This is the practise I here censure, which like a *Trojan Horse*, hath sent forth multitudes of Erroneous Persons into the City of God to infest and defile it.

I cannot doubt but many a sincere Christian may be drawn into such employment which puts him into a capacity of honouring God in a more eminent way, which is a thing desirable to an honest and zealous heart: and that the temptation may be greatly strengthened upon them by the plausible suggestions of cunning Seducers, who tell them, That those *Ministers* who oppose and condemn this practise, do it as men concerned for their own Interest, as desirous to monopolize the work to themselves, and as envying the Lord's People: and that Christ hath given them a greater liberty in this case, than those men will allow them. By

this means they daw many after them, and fix them in their Erroneous ways.

I have no mind at all here to expose the Follies and Mischiefs introduced this way, as neither being willing to grieve the hearts of the Sincere on one side, nor gratify scoffing *Atheists*, and prophane Enemies to Religion, upon the other side : only this I will, and must say, That by this means the Sacred Scriptures are most injuriously wrested, the Peace and Order of the Church disturbed, and a great many Mistakes and Errors introduced.

*The Remedies.*

The prevention and cure of Errors this way introduced, or likely to be introduced into the Church, is by pondering and applying the following *Considerations*.

*Consideration I.*

Let all that encourage others, or undertake by others encouragement such a Work as this, for which they are not competently qualified, and unto which they are not regularly called, consider seriously with themselves what danger they cast their own, and other mens Souls upon.

The

The Apostle tells us, 2 Pet. 3.16. *That the unlearned and unstable do wrest the Scriptures to their own destruction.* Danger enough, one would think, to scare them from it, did not the same sin of Ignorance, which makes them wrest the Scriptures, cause them also to slight and overlook the danger of so doing. \*

\* *Athanasius* indi-

cat Scripturas malitiosè intellectas & detortas, errores parere. *Athanasius contra Apollinar.*

Certainly, my Friends, it is a great deal safer, and more excusable, to put an ignorant *Rustick* into an *Apothecary's Shop* to compound a Medicine of Drugs and Spirits, which he understands not, and confidently administer the same to the Bodies of men; than for such Persons as are led by ignorance and confidence, to intermeddle with the Ministerial Employment: the one, perhaps, by mistake, may poison mens Bodies; but the other their Souls. An ignorant *Master*, or *Pilot*, that never learned the *Compass*, are rather to be trusted among Rocks and Quick-sands, than a proud ignorant Person with the conduct of Souls.

## Consideration II.

What daring Presumption is it to intrude our selves into so great and weighty an Employment without any Call or Warrant of Christ! *Rom. 10. 14. How shall they call upon him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a Preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?*

These Mysteries must be committed to faithful Men, who shall be able to teach others. Those Abilities must be examined, *1 Tim. 3. 10.* and the Exercise of them warranted by a due and orderly appointment thereunto, *1 Tim. 4. 14.* else (as one well observes) *In tam praposterâ disciplina ruinâ tot essent sensus, quot capita; tot dissensus, quot sensus;* we shall have as many senses of Scripture, as we have Preachers, &c.

If every *Phaeton*, that thinks himself able, shall undertake to drive the *Chariot* of the *Sun*, no wonder if the World be set on fire. Gifts and Abilities of Mind are not of themselves sufficient to make a *Preacher*. Some *Lawyers* at the *Bar* may be as skilful as the *Judge* upon the *Bench*, but without a Commission they dare not sit there.

Conside-

*Consideration III.*

The honour you affect, to vent your unsound Notions with liberty, is in Scripture-account your greatest dishonour.

The Scripture reckons false Teachers among the basest of the People: *The Prophet that teacheth lyes, he is the Tayl*, i. e. the basest part of the whole body of the People, *Isa. 9. 15.* And so far is due Gospel-Liberty from countenancing such dangerous Irregularities, that we find in a clear Prophecy of Gospel-times, what shame God will pour upon them, *Zech. 13. 4, 5.* *They shall be brought with shame enough to confess, I am no Prophet, I am an Husband-man; for man taught me to keep Cattel from my youth.*

*Consideration IV.*

How much more safe, regular and advantageous were it for such as you, to fill your own proper Places under able and faithful Gospel-Ministers, and to suck the Breasts of fruitful Ordinances, than to consume and pine away by sucking your own Breasts? I mean, living upon your own weak and insufficient Gifts, in the sinful neglect of Christ's Appointments?

*Cause*



*Cause XIV.*

False Teachers also propagate their Errors by a Spirit of *ENTHUSIASM*, the usual concomitant of Erroneous Doctrine ; and draw away multitudes after them, by pretending to extraordinary Revelations, Visions, and Voices from Heaven, which seem to give great credit to their Way and Party. \*

\* Nonnulli autem

falsorum Prophetarum vaticinio illecti, de quibus & veri Prophetæ, & ipse prædixerat, exciderunt à doctrinâ Dei, & traditionem veram reliquerunt. Sed illi omnes dæmoniacis fraudibus irretiti, quas prospicere & cavere debuerant, divinum nomen & cultum per imprudentiam perdiderunt. *Lact.* lib. 4. cap. 30. *de Hæresibus.*

This was an old trick and practice of Deceivers, *Deut.* 13. 1. to give Signs and Wonders in confirmation of their Way, which Signs the Lord may permit to fall out to prove his People, *vers.* 2. 3. tho, for the most part, they are confuted by their unanswerable Events.

In the beginning of our *Reformation* by *Luther, Calvin, &c.* there sprung up a Generation of Men, called *Swenkfeldians*, great Pretenders to Revelations and Visions, who were always speaking of *Deifications* ; and an higher strain of Language they commonly used among themselves, than other serious Christians understood,

derstood, and therefore scornfully entitled Orthodox and humble Christians, who stuck to the Scripture-phrase, and wholesome form of sound words, *Grammatists, Vocabulists, Literalists, &c.* These Men (as \* *Sculdetus* in his *Annals*, ad \* *Irretiti*  
*annum* 1525. observes of them) were so suis quibusdam  
entangled in certain Enthusiastick Snares, Enthusia-  
that they thought it the highest impiety sticis la-  
to renounce them: and they had befooled queis, un-  
multitudes with their magnificent words de se ex-  
of *Illumination, Revelation, Deification.* tricari  
summam  
putant  
*impietatem: dementabant multos magnificis istis verbis, Illumina-  
tio, Revelatio, Deificatio, &c.*

4 Much of the same Spirit was *Thomas Muntzer, John of Leyden, David George, Jacob Behmen, &c.* whose cloudy Nonsense, ænigmatical Expressions, and wilful Obscurity, drew many into a strange admiration of them: They all pretend to an higher knowledge of Mysteries than what the Gospel is acquainted with; and and yet give us (as Mr. *Baxter* well observes) neither *Reasons* with *Aristotle*, nor *Miracles* with *Christ*, and his Apostles, to cause us to believe any of their new Revelations. *Vid. Baxter of the Sin against the Holy Ghost*, p. 148.

Of the same Bran were our late *Familiſts* in *England*, of whom *Henry Nichols* was the chief Leader, who decried the written Word as a dead Letter ; and ſet up their own fond Conceits and Fancies under the notion of the Spirit ; againſt whom that heavenly and Learned Man, Mr. *Samuel Rutherford*, ſeaſonably and ſucceſsfully appeared. *Hacket*, *Coppinger* and *Arthington*, were of the ſame Tribe ; who lived a-while wrapt up in *Antinomian* Fancies, which at laſt brake forth into the higheſt and moſt horrid Blaſphemies.

Another Art they make uſe of to ſeduce the Credulous, is a pretence unto the Spirit of Prophecy ; and great ſucceſs they promiſe themſelves this way among the weak, but curious Vulgar. And to this end Satan hath inſpired and employed ſome Cunning Head to invent very pleaſing Predictions and Prophecies, in favour of that Party whom he deſigns to deceive. And how catching and bewitching theſe things are, gaining more reſpect among theſe vain Spirits, than the divine unqueſtionable Prophecies of Scripture, this Age hath had full and ſad experience.

Now

Now the Design of Satan in these things, is to gain credit to those *Sects*, as People peculiarly favoured and beloved of God above others; as if they were the particular Favourites of Heaven, as *Daniel* was; and so to draw the Multitude to admire their Persons, and espouse their Errors.

*The Remedies.*

Now the *Remedies* in this Case are such as follow.

*Remedy I.*

Whatever Doctrine or Practice seeks credit to it self this way, falls justly thereby under suspicion, that it wants a solid Scripture-foundation.

God hath not left his People to seek satisfaction in such uncertain ways as these; but hath given them a surer word of Prophecy, to which they do well to take heed, *2 Pet. 1. 19.* He hath tyed us to the standing Rule of the Word, forbidding us to give heed to any other Voice, or Spirit, leading us another way, *Isa. 8. 19. 2 Theff. 2. 1, 2. Gal. 1. 8.* Scripture-light is a safe and sure Light, a pleasant and sufficient Light.

The

The Scripture (saith *Luther*) is so full, that as for Visions and Revelations, *nec curro, nec desidero*, I neither regard, nor desire them. And when he himself had a Vision of Christ after a day of fasting and prayer, he cried out, *Avoid Satan, I know no Image of Christ, but the Scripture.* An hankering mind after these things, speaks a sickly and distempered state of Soul, as longing after Trash in young distempered Persons, doth a distempered state, or ill habit of Body.

Mr. *William Bridges* somewhere tells us of a Religious *Lady* of the *Empresses* Bed-chamber, whose name was *Gregoria*, who being greatly troubled about her Salvation, wrote to *Gregory*, That she would never cease importuning him, 'till he had sent her word, that he had obtained a Revelation from Heaven that she should be saved : to whom he returned this Answer ; *Rem difficilem postulas & inutilem*, Thou requirest of me that which is difficult to me, and unprofitable for thee.

• *Remedy II.*

Consider how often the World hath been abused by the Tricks and Cheats of that officious Spirit, the Devil, in such ways as these. What

What hath propagated Idolatry among *Heathens* and *Christians* more than this? *Hinc fluxerunt multa peregrinationes, Monasteria, delubra, dies festi & alia*, saith *Lavater*, in *Job* 33. *Pilgrimages, Monasteries, Shrines of Saints, Holy-days, &c.* have been introduced by this Trick. 'Twere endless to give Instances of it in the Histories of former Ages. \*

\* Of the Prophecies, Visions and pretended Inspirations of *Storke, Pfeiffer, Becold, Warendorp, &c.* with the efficacy of them on the deluded People, and fatal consequences of them both to the Deceived, and Deceivers: See *Mr. Samuel Rutherford's Survey of the Spiritual Antichrist*, p. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

We have a notable late Account of it among our selves, in a *Book*, entitled, [*A Discovery of the notorious Falsehood and Dissimulation contained in a Book, stiled, The Gospel-way confirmed by Miracles*] Licens'd and published 1649. wherein is laid open to the World, the free Confession of *Ann Wells, Matthen Hall, &c.* deluding the People of *Whatfield* in *Suffolk* with such pretended Voices, Visions, Prophecies and Revelations, the like have scarcely been heard of in *England* since the Reformation. Multitudes of People were deluded by them.

At length the Lord extorted from this Woman a full Confession of the notorious falseness of these things, by a terrible Vision of Hell : her Partizans laboured four days to suppress and stifle it, but to no purpose : for the Horrors of Conscience prevailed with her to confess the notorious Dissimulations contained in that Book, before the People of *Whatfield*, and a Justice of the Peace. And thus the Lord out-shot Satan in his own Bow.

*Remedy III.*

Consider how difficult, yea, and impossible it is for a man to determine that such a Voice, Vision, or Revelation is of God ; and that Satan cannot feign or counterfeit it ; seeing he hath left no certain marks by which we may distinguish one Spirit from another : *an albus ? an ater ?*

Sure we are, Satan can transform himself into an Angel of Light ; and therefore abandoning all those unsafe and uncertain ways, whereby Swarms of Errors have been conveyed into the World, let us cleave inseparably to the sure Word of Prophecy, the Rule and Standard of our Faith and Duty.

*Cause*

*Cause XV.*

Another way in which False Teachers discover their Subtilty with great success, is, in *TIMING* their Assaults, and nicking the proper Season, when the minds of men are most apt and easy to be drawn away by their fair and specious Pretences.

Such a Season as this, they find about the time of mens first Conversion, or soon after their Implantation into Christ. Now it is that their Affections are most lively and vigorous, though their Judgments be but weak. They have now such strong and deep apprehensions of the Grace and Love of Christ, and such transcendent zeal for him, that they easily embrace any thing whereby they conceive he may be honoured and exalted. They have also such deep Apprehensions and powerful Aversations as to Sin, that they are in danger to fly even from Truth and Duty it self, when it shall be artificially represented to them as Sin. For not only that which is *malum per se*, Sin indeed; but that which is *male coloratum*, painted with Sin's Colours, is apt to scare and fright them.

K

Besides,



Besides, These young Converts or Novices have not had time to confirm and root themselves in the Truth; and Trees newly planted are much more easily drawn up, than those that have spread and fastened their Roots in the Earth. 'Tis observable what a swarm of false Teachers troubled the Churches of *Corinth*, *Galatia* and *Philippi*, at, and newly after their first planting: and what danger those young Christians were in, abundantly appears in the Apostle's frequent Cautions and holy Jealousy over them: he bids them *beware of Dogs*, *beware of Evil Workers*, *beware of the Concision*, *Phil. 3. 2. I fear lest by any means as the Serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ*, *2 Cor. 11. 3.* he was afraid of the *Galatians*, lest he had bestowed upon them labour in vain, *Gal. 4. 11.* he would not give place to false Brethren, no not for an hour, *Gal. 2. 5.* charges the *Romans* to receive them that were weak in the faith, but not to doubtful Disputations, *Rom. 14. 1.* All which, and many more Expressions, discover his grounded jealousy, and their extraordinary danger of seduction at their first plantation. A Novice in Christianity  
is

is the Person Satan seeks for : strong Believers are not in such apparent danger as little ones in Christ, 1 *John* 5. 21. *Little Children, keep your selves from Idols.*

And the reason is, because keen Affections, match'd with weak Judgments, give a mighty advantage to Seducers. Children are apt to be taken with beautiful Appearances, and fine shews ; and Erroneous Teachers have the very knack to set a gloss of extraordinary sanctity upon their dangerous Opinions. Hence those Persons that promoted the Sect of the *Nicolaitans*, made use of a cunning Woman, who for her skill in painting Errors with the Colours of Truth, got the name of *Jezebel*, *Rev.* 2. 20. That *Queen* was famous for the art of Painting, 1 *King.* 16. and so was this false *Prophets* : indeed there was scarce any eminent Sect of Errorists or Hereticks mentioned in Church-history, but some curious feminine Artist hath been employed to lay the beautiful Colours upon it. So we find *Simon Magus* had his *Helena*. *Carpocrates* his *Marcellina*. *Montanus* his *Priscilla* and *Maximilla*. And the curious Colours of Holiness, Zeal and Free-grace, artificially laid upon the face of Error, how wrinkled and ugly soever in

it self, sets it off temptingly and takingly to weak and injudicious Minds.

Moreover, Erroneous Teachers are great Boasters : They usually give out to the World what extraordinary Comforts they meet with in their way, which proves a strong temptation to young Converts, who have been so lately in the depths of spiritual Trouble, to try at least, if not to embrace it, for the expected Comforts sake.

Ah, how many pious Ministers in *England*, upon such Grounds and Pretences as these, have had their spiritual Children rent from them as soon as born ! they have travailed as in birth for them ; and no sooner did they begin to take comfort in the success of their Labours, but to the great grief and discouragement of their hearts, they have been this way bereaved of them. Those that have owned them as their spiritual Fathers one month, would scarce vouchsafe to own them, when they have met them in the Streets another month. Many sad Instances I could give of this, and some as remarkable as they are fresh and recent : but I silence particulars. Oh see the advantage Satan and his Instruments gain by nicking such a critical Season as this is.

*The*

*The Cure, or Remedy.*

The *Remedies* in this case are twofold : the first respects the spiritual Fathers; and the second the spiritual Children : both are concerned in the danger, and the Lord help both to attend to their duty.

*Remedy I.*

Let all those whose Ministry God blesses with the desirable fruits of Conversion, look carefully after the Souls of young Converts.

No *Nurse* should be more tender and careful of her Charge, than a Minister should be : and unto the care of a tender *Nurse*, *Paul* compareth his care over the young Converts in *Thessalonica*, 1 *Thess.* 2. 7. for alas, they lie exposed to all dangers : they are credulous, and Seducers cunning : they want judgment to discern Truth from Error; have not yet attained unto Senses exercised, and Age in Christ to discern Good from Evil : when Errors are made palatable, Children will be hankering after them, and Seducers have the very art to make them so.

---*Veluti pueris absynthia tetra medentes  
Cum dare conantur, prius oras pocula circum  
Contingunt dulci Mellis, flavoque liquore.*

Shepherds look to your Flocks; imitate the great Shepherd of the Sheep, who gathereth the Lambs with his Arms, and carries them in his Bosome; visit them frequently, exhort and warn them diligently, and use all means to establish them in the present Truths.

*Remedy II.*

Let young Converts and weak Christians look carefully to themselves by an heedful attendance unto the following Truths.

First, It is not safe to try, nor upon trial likely that you should find Christ in one way, and comfort in another. God doth not usually bless those ways to mens comfort and edification, into which they turn aside from that good way wherein they first met with Christ and Conversion. The same Ministry and Ordinances which are appointed and blessed for the one, are likewise appointed, and commonly blessed for the other, *Eph. 4. 11, 12, 13.*

Secondly, 'Tis a manifest Snare of the Devil (and you may easily discern it) to take you off from the great Work you are newly engaged in, by entangling your minds in Notions that are foreign to it.

Your

Your hearts are now warm with God, Satan labours this way to cool and quench them : the cunning Cheat labours to steal away the sweet and nutritive Food which is before you, and lay the hard and dry Bones of barren Controversies and insipid Notions in their room. Your business is not to frame *Syllogisms*, or study Solutions to cunning Arguments about lower and lesser matters, so much as it is by Prayer and Self-examination, to clear your Interest in Christ, and to solve those doubts that lie with weight upon your Spirits, with reference to that great Concern.

Thirdly, 'Tis a sad thing to grieve the hearts of those faithful Ministers that have travelled in pain for us, and rejoiced in our Conversion as the Seal of their Ministry. Oh, serve not your godly Ministers, as the *Hen* is sometimes served that hath long brooded, brought forth, and with much care and self-denial nourished up young Partridges, which as soon as fledged, take the wing, and return no more to her.

*Cause XVI.*

There is yet another Artifice of false Teachers to draw Men into Errors, and

that is, by pressing the Consciences of those they have made some impressions upon, unto all *HASTE* and *SPEED*, openly to declare their new Opinions, and avow and own them before the World; as knowing that this will rivet and fix them to all intents and purposes.

When they find Men under half Convictions, and strong inclinations to their way, they are sure then to ply them with a thick succession of Motives and Arguments, to joyn themselves by a free and open profession, to that erroneous Party which are headed by themselves.

And the Arguments usually pressed to this purpose are,

1. The danger of delay.
2. The comfort of declaring themselves.

*First*, They press them with the danger of the least delay, by telling them, That now they must live every day and hour in known sin, and hold the truth of God in unrighteousness, the evil whereof they skilfully aggravate; and the more tender and sensible the Conscience is, the deeper impressions such discourses make, although the Case, indeed, will not bear the weight they lay upon it, as having not that due allowance God gives

gives of time and means of full information in matters of this nature; yea, possibly driving them into as great a snare by precipitation, and too hasty engagements under a Doubting Conscience.

*Secondly*, They press them to a quick resolution, with the expectations of abundance of comfort, inward peace and joy, which will result from a full engagement of themselves, and open declaration of their Judgment; proseliting to a Party, being the main design they drive at.

This was the very Art and Method by which Satan prevailed with *Eve* to swallow the bait; *Gen. 3. 5. For God doth know, that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as Gods, knowing good and evil. q. d.* The sooner thou tastest, the better; for the first taste will give thee a God-like knowledge, and marvellous advancement of thy understanding; Didst thou but know the benefit that would accrue to thee thereby, thou wouldst not delay one moment. And thus by setting before her the speedy and immediate benefits of eating, he prevailed, and drew her into the fatal snare.

In



In this the Ministers of Satan imitate the Ministers of Christ : As these press Men to make haste to Christ, lest by consulting with flesh and blood, and listening to the temptations of Satan, hopeful inclinations should be blasted in the bud ; so the others push Men on to hasty resolutions, lest by hearkening to the voice of God's Spirit and their own Consciences, the design they have so far advanced should be lost and disappointed. The Ministers of Christ urge Men to a speedy change of their Company, and to associate themselves with spiritual and profitable Christians, as well knowing of what great use this will be to confirm and strengthen them in the ways of God. So Errorists in like manner vehemently urge them to associate with their Party, as knowing how one wedges in and fixes another in the ways of Error ; for such Causes Satan pushes on half-convictions into hasty resolutions, quick dispatch being his great advantage. This the Apostle intimates, *Gal. 1. 6. I marvel (saith he) that ye are so soon removed, &c. ἔτι ταχέως*, what so soon ! yes, if it had not been so soon, it might never have been at all ; for *Errors* (as one ingeniously observes) like Fish, must  
be

be eaten fresh and new, or they'l quickly stink.

*The Cure, or Remedy.*

The *Remedies* and *Preventatives* in this Case, are such as follow :

*Remedy I.*

Consider, that hasty engagements in weighty and disputable matters, have cost many Souls dear.

As hasty *Marriages* have produced long and late repentance; so hath the clapping up of an hasty Match betwixt the Mind and Error. By entertaining strange persons, Men sometimes entertain *Angels* unaware ; but by entertaining of strange Doctrines, many have entertained Devils unawares. 'Tis not safe to open the door of the Soul to let in strangers in the night ; let them wait till a clear daylight of information shew you what they are.

*Remedy II.*

Weighty Actions require answerable Deliberations. It was the worthy saying of *Augustus Caesar* \*, *That's soon enough, that's well enough.* There be many things to be considered, and throughly weigh-

\* Satis celeriter fieri, quicquid commode geritur.

weighed, before a Man change his judgment, and embrace a new Doctrine or Opinion. *Luther*, in his Epistle to the Ministers of *Norimberg*, cites an excellent passage out of *Basil* \*, He that is about to separate himself from the society of his Brethren, had need to consider many things even unto anxiety; to beg of God the demonstration of Truth with many tears, and to pass many solitary nights with waking eyes, before he attempt, or put such a matter in execution. By the vote of the whole rational World, Time and Consideration ought to be proportionate to the weight of an Undertakement.

\* Multa  
anxiè con-  
siderare e-  
um oportet,  
& multas  
noctes  
absumere  
insomnes,  
& cum  
multis la-  
chrymis  
petere à  
Deo veri-  
tatis de-  
monstra-  
tionem,  
qui se à  
fratribus  
separari  
vult.

### *Remedy III.*

The only season Men have to weigh things judiciously and impartially, is before their affections be too far engaged, and their credit and reputation too much concerned.

Men are better able to weigh Doctrines and Opinions, whilst they are other mens, than when they have espoused them and made them their own. Before an Opinion be espoused, the Affections do not blind and pervert the Judgment, as they do afterward. Self-love

Perit om-  
ne judi-  
cium, cum  
res trans-  
it in affe-  
ctum.

love pulls down the balance at that end which is next us. If therefore by hasty resolution, you lose this only proper and advantageous season of deliberation, you are not like to find such another.

*Remedy IV.*

Trust not to the clearness of your own unassisted eyes, nor to the strength of your single reason; but consult in such cases, with others that are pious and judicious, especially your godly and faithful Ministers; and hearken to the Counsels they give you. *Paul* justly wondered that the *Galatians* were so soon removed; and well he might: For had they not a *Paul* to consult with, before they gave their consent to false Teachers? Or if he was at a distance from them about the work of the Lord in remote places, had they no godly and judicious Friends near them, whose Prayers and assistances they might call in, as *Daniel* did? *Dan.* 2. 17. Wo unto him that is alone in a time of temptation, except the Lord be with him by extraordinary assistance and direction.

*Remedy*

*Remedy V.*

Lastly, Suspect that Opinion (as justly you may) for erroneous, that's too importunate and pressing upon you, and will not allow you due time of consideration, and means of information. That which is a truth to day, will be a truth to morrow: But that which looks like a truth to day, may be detected, and look like it self, an odious Error to morrow. And this is the reason of that post-haste that Satan and his Factors make to gain our present consent, lest a speedy detection frustrate the suit, and spoil the design. The *Uses* follow in Six *Consecratories*.

*Consecratory I.*

From all that hath been said about *Errors*, we see in the first place, the great usefulness and plain necessity of an able, faithful, standing *Ministry* in the Church.

One special end of the Ministry, is the establishment of the peoples Souls against the Errors of the times, *Eph. 4. 11, 14.* *He gave some Apostles, &c. that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men, &c.* Ministers  
are

are Shepherds, and without a Shepherd, how soon will the flock go astray? *Moses* was absent but a few days from the *Israelites*, and at his return found them all run into the snares of Idolatry. A Sheep is *animal sequax*, a creature that follows a Leader. One stragler may mislead a whole flock. A Minister's work is not only to feed, but to defend the flock. I am set (saith *Paul*) for the defence of the Gospel, *Phil.* 1. 17. An Orthodox and Faithful Minister, is a double blessing to the people; but woe to that people, whose Ministers, instead of securing them against Errors, do cause them to err, *Isa.* 9. 16. they are the Dogs of the Flock. Some in Scripture are called dumb dogs, who, instead of barking at the Thief, bite the Children: But faithful Ministers give warning of spiritual dangers. So did the worthy Ministers of *London*, *Worcestershire*, *Devon*, &c. in their Testimonies against Errors.

*Confectary II.*

This discourse shews us also how little quietness and peace the Church may expect, till a greater degree of light and unity be poured out upon it; what by per-

persecutions from without it, and troubles from within, little tranquility is to be expected. 'Tis a Note of St. *Bernards*, that the Church hath sometimes had *pacem à Paganis, sed rarò aut nunquam à filiis*, peace sometimes from *Pagan* Persecutors, but seldom or never any peace from her own Children.

We read, *Zech. 14. 7.* the whole state of the Christian Church, from the primitive days, to the end of the World, set forth under the notion of one day, and that a strange day too, the light of it shall *neither be clear nor dark, nor day nor night, but at evening time it shall be light ; i. e.* a day full of interchangeable and alternate providences. Sometimes persecutions, heresies and errors prevail, and these make that part of the day dark and gloomy ; and then Truth and Peace break forth again, and clear up the day. Thus it hath been, and thus it will be until the evening of it, and at even-time it shall be light ; then light and love shall get the ascendant of error and divisions. Most of our scuffles and contentions are for want of greater measures of both these.

*Confectary III.*

From the manifold Causes and Mischiefs of Errors before mentioned, we may also see what a choice mercy it is to be kept sound in judgment, stedfast and unmovable in the Truths and Ways of Christ. A sound and stedfast Christian is a blessing in his Generation, and a glory to his Profession. 'Twas an high *Encomium* of *Atbanasius*, *Sedem maluit mutare, quam syllabam*: He would rather lose his Seat, than a syllable of God's Truth. Soundness of Judgment must needs be a choice Blessing; because the understanding is the *το ἡγεμονικόν*, that leading-faculty which directs the Will and Conscience of Man, and they his whole Life and Practice. How often and how earnestly doth Christ pray for his people, that they may be kept in the Truth? 'Tis true, Orthodoxy in its self is not sufficient to any man's Salvation; but the conjunction of an Orthodox head, with an honest sincere heart, does always constitute an excellent Christian, *Phil. 1. 10.* Happy is the man that hath an head so hearted, and an heart so headed.



## Confectary IV.

By this discourse we may further discover one great and special cause and reason of the lamentable decay of the spirit and power of Religion, amongst the Professors of the present Age.

'Tis a complaint more just than common, That *we do all fade as a leaf*. And what may be the Cause? Nothing more probable than the wasting of our time and spirits in vain janglings and fruitless controversies, which the Apostle tells us, *Heb. 13. 9.* have not profited, *i. e.* they have greatly damnified and injured them that have been occupied therein. Many Controversies of these times grow up about Religion, as Suckers from the Root and Limbs of a Fruit-tree, which spend the vital Sap that should make it fruitful.

\* Anglia  
4. annis  
facta est  
colluvies,  
& lerna  
omnium  
errorum,  
& sectarum. Nulla

\* 'Tis a great and sad Observation made upon the state of *England* by some judicious persons, That after the greatest increase of Religion, both intensively in the power of it, and extensively in the number of Converts, what a remarkable

à condito orbe provincia tam parvo spatio tot monstrosas hæreses protulit atque hæc. *Honor. Reg. de Statu Ecclæs. Brittan. p. 1.*

ble decay it suffered both ways, when about the year Forty-four, Controversies and Disputations grew fervent among Professors. Since that time our strength and glory have very much abated.

*Confectary V.*

From this Discourse we may also gather, the true Grounds and Reasons of those frequent Persecutions which God lets in upon his Churches and People: These rank Weeds call for Snowy and Frosty Weather to subdue and kill them.

I know the enemies of God's People aim at something else: They strike at Profession, yea, at Religion it self; and according to their wicked intention, without timely Repentance, will their reward be. But whatever the intention of the Agents be, the issues of Persecution are upon this account greatly beneficial to the Church; the Wisdom of God makes them excellently useful, both to prevent and cure the mischiefs and dangers of Errors. If Enemies were not, Friends and Brethren would be injurious to each other. Persecution, if it kills not, yet at least it gives check

to the rise and growth of Errors : And if it do not perfectly redintegrate and unite the hearts of Christians, yet to be sure it cools and allays their sinful heats ; and that two ways : (1.) By cutting out for them far better and more necessary work. Now, instead of racking their Brains about unnecessary Controversies, they find it high time to be searching their hearts, and examining the foundations of their Faith and Hope, with respect to the other World. (2.) Moreover, such times and straights, discover the Sincerity, Zeal and Constancy of them we were jealous of, or prejudiced against before, because they followed not us.

*Confectary VI.*

*Lastly*, Let us learn hence, both the Duty and Necessity of Charity and mutual Forbearance ; We have all our mistakes and errors one way or other, and therefore must maintain mutual Charity under dissents in judgment.

I do not say, but an erring Brother must be reduced if possible, and that by sharp rebukes too, if gentler essays be ineffectual, *Tit.* 1. 13. and the wounds of a Friend have more faithful love in them,

them, than the kisses of an Enemy: And if God make us instrumentall by that or any other method, to recover a Brother from the error of his way, he will have great cause, both to bless God, and thank the Instrument, who thereby saves a Soul from death, and hides a multitude of sins, *Jam.* 5. 20. 'Tis our Duty, if we meet an Enemy's Ox or Ass going astray, to bring him back again; *Exod.* 23. 4. much more the Soul of a Friend. Indeed, we must not make those Errors that are none, nor stretch every innocent expression to that purpose; nor yet be too hasty in meddling with contention, till we cannot be both silent and innocent; and then whatever the expence be, Truth will repay it.

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A N

## APPENDIX:

Containing a Full and Modest Reply to Mr. Philip Cary's Rejoinder to my *Vindiciæ Legis & Fœderis*.

*Manifesting the badness of his Cause, in the feebleness and impertinency of his Defence. And adding farther light and strength to the Arguments formerly produced in defence of God's gracious Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. and the right of Believers Infants to Baptism, grounded thereupon.*

S I R,

**N**EXT to the not deserving a Reproof, is the due reception and improvement of it. You deserve a sharper reprehension for your timidity and obstinacy, than I am willing to give you from the *Press*. Yet in love to the Truth, and your own Soul, reprove you I must, and I hope God will

L 4

enable

enable me to be both mild in the manner, and convincingly clear in the matter and cause thereof. 'Tis better to lose the *Smiles*, than the *Souls* of men. I dare not neglect the duty of a Friend, for fear of incurring the suspicion of an Enemy. Several Learned and Eminent Divines who have seen what hath publicly passed betwixt you and me, have returned me their thanks, and think you ought to thank me too for the pains I have taken to set you right, hoping you will evidence your self-denial and repentance by an ingenuous retraction of your Errors.

But how will you deceive their Expectations, and unbecome the Character given you by your Friends, when they shall find the true measure both of your ability and humility drawn by your own Pen in the following Rejoinder?

I have thoroughly considered your Reply in the Manuscript you sent me, which I hear is now in the *Press*; and in the following Sheets have given a full, and (I think) a final Answer to whatsoever is material therein. And it so falling out, that my Discourse of *Errors* was just going under the *Press*, whilst your Rejoinder was there also, I thought it not convenient to delay my Reply any longer,  
but

but to have my Antidote in as great readiness as might be to meet it.

One Inconvenience I easily foresee, that the Pages of your Manuscript, which I follow, may not throughout exactly answer to the Print: But every intelligent Reader will easily discern and rectify That, if my Bookseller save him not that trouble, as I have desired him to do.

As to the Controversy about the Right of Believers Infant-seed to *Baptism*, you have altogether adventured it the second time with the consent of your Partizans, upon the three *Hypotheses*, which (if I mistake not) I have fully confuted and baffled in my first Answer. But if my brevity occasioned any obscurity in that, I hope you shall find it sufficiently done here. Mean time you have given, and I accordingly take it for granted, that our Arguments for *Infants Baptism* stand in their full strength against you, 'till you can better discharge and free your dangerous Assertions from the Errors and Absurdities in which they are now more involved and intricated than before.

The



The weaker any thing is, the more querulous it is. If Scripture-Argument, and clear Reason, will not support the Cause I undertake, I am resolved never to call in passionate Invectives and weak Evasions for my Auxiliaries, as you have here done. The Lord give us all clearer Light, tenderer Consciences, exemplary Humility and Ingenuity.

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*Vindici-*

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*Vindiciarum Vindex :*

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OR, A  
 REFUTATION  
 OF THE  
 Weak and Impertinent Rejoinder  
 OF  
 Mr. *PHILIP CART*:

Wherein he vainly attempts the defence of his *Absurd Thesis*, to the great abuse and injury of the Laws and Covenants of God.

**A**N D must I be dipt once more in the Water-Controversy ? 'tis time for me to think of undressing my self, and making ready for my approaching Rest, and employ those few moments I have to spend, in more Practical and Beneficial Studies, for my own,

own, and the Churches greater advantage. And 'tis time for Mr. C. to reflect upon his past Follies, which have consumed too much of his own, and others time, without any advantage; yea, to the apparent loss and injury of the Cause he undertakes to defend.

When I received these Sheets from him, in vindication of his *Solemn Call*, I was at a stand in my own Resolutions, whether to let it pass (without any Animadversions upon it) as a passionate Clamor for a desperate Cause; or give a short and full Answer to his confused and impertinent Rejoinder. But considering that I had under hand at the same time the foregoing *Treatise of the Causes and Cures of Mental Errors*; and that though my honest Neighbour discovers much weakness in his way of Argumentation, yet it was like to meet with some interested Readers, to whom, for that reason, it would be the more suitable; and how apt such Persons are to glory in the last word; but especially considering that a little time and pains would suffice (as the Case stands) to end the unseasonable Controversy betwixt us, and both clear and confirm many great and weighty Points of Religion: I was upon these  
Con-

Considerations prevailed with, against my own Inclination, to cast in these few Sheets as a *Mantissa* to the former seasonable and necessary Discourse of *Errors*, resolving to fill them with what should be worth the Reader's time and pains.

As for the rude Insults, uncomely Reflections, and passionate Expressions of my discontented Friend, I shall not throw back the dirt upon him, when I wipe it off from my self: I can easily forgive and forget them too. The best men have their Passions, *Jam. 5. 17.* even *Sweet-briers* and *Holy-Thistles* have their offensive Prickles. I consider my honest Neighbour under the strength of a Temptation. It disquiets him to see the Labours of many years, and the raised Expectations of so great a conquest and triumph over men of Renown, all frustrated by his Friend and Neighbour, who had done his utmost to prevent it; and often foretold him of the folly and vanity of his Attempt. Every thing will live as long as it can, and *natura vexata prodit seipsam*. But certainly it had been more for Truth's honour, and Mr. C's comfort, to have confessed his Follies humbly to God, and have laid his hand upon his mouth.

The

The things in controversy betwixt us, are great and weighty, *viz.* The true nature of the *Sinai Laws*, in their complex body; the quality of God's *Covenant* with *Abraham*; and the dispensation of the *New Covenant* we are now under. These are things of great weight in themselves; and their due Resolutions are at this time somewhat the more weighty, because my *Antagonist* hath adventured the whole Controversy of Infants Baptism upon them.

I have in my *Vindicia Legis, &c.* stated the several Questions clearly and distinctly. Shewn Mr. C. what is no part of the Controversy, and what is the very hinge upon which it turns; desired him, if he made any Reply, to keep close to the just and necessary Rules of Disputation, by distinguishing, limiting, or denying any of my Propositions; that the matters in Controversy might be put to a fair and speedy issue. But instead of that, I meet with a flood of words rolling sometimes to this part, and then to another part of my Answer, and so back again, without the steady direction of Art or Reason. There may, for ought I know, be some things of weight in Mr. Cary's Reply, if a man could see them

them for words : but without scoff or vanity I must say of the rational part of it, as the *Poet* said of the overdressed Woman,---*Pars minima est ipsa Puella sui*, 'tis the least part of it. To follow him in his irregular and extravagant way of writing, were to make my self guilty of the same folly I blame him for. I am therefore necessitated to perstringe them, and reduce all I have to say, under three general Heads.

- I. I shall clearly evince to the World, That Mr.*Cary* hath not been able to discharge and free his own *Theses* from the horrid Consequents, and gross Absurdities which I laid to their charge in my first Reply ; but instead thereof, in this feeble and unsuccessful attempt to free the former, he hath entangled himself in more and greater ones.
- II. That he hath left my *Arguments* standing in their full strength against him.
- III. And then I shall confirm and strengthen my three *Positions*, which destroy the Cause he manages, by some further Additions of Scripture, Reason and Authorities,

ties, which I hope will fully end this matter betwixt us.

But before I touch the Particulars, two things must be premised for the Reader's due information.

1. That the Controversie about the true nature of the *Sinai Laws*, both Moral and Ceremonial, complexly considered, is not that very Hinge upon which the Right of Believers Infants to Baptism depends : that stands as it did before, be the *Sinai Laws* what they will. We do not derive the Right of Infants from any other Law or Covenant, but that gracious Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, which was in being 430 years before *Moses* his Law ; and was no way injured, much less disannulled, by the addition of it. If *Abraham's* Covenant be the same Covenant of Grace we are now under, the Right of Believers Infants to Baptism, is secured, whatever the *Sinai* Covenant prove to be. Which I speak not out of the least jealousy that *Mr. Cary* hath, or ever shall be able to prove it to be a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works ; but to prevent Mistakes in the Reader.

2. It

2. It must be heedfully observed also, that how free, gracious and absolute forever the New Covenant be, (for God forbid that I should go about to eclipse the glory of Free-grace on which my Soul depends for Salvation) yet that will never prove *Abraham's* Covenant to be an abolished *Adam's* Covenant of Works, unless two things more be proved, which I never expect to see, *viz.*

*First*, That *Abraham*, and his believing Posterity, were bound by the very nature and act of Circumcision to keep the whole Law in their own persons in order to their Justification and Salvation, as perfectly and perpetually, and under the same penalty for the least failure, as *Adam* was to keep the Law in *Paradise*.

*Secondly*, It must be further proved, That *Abraham*, and all his believing Offspring, who stood with him under that Covenant, whereof Circumcision was the initiating Sign, were all saved in a different way from that in which Believers are now saved under the Gospel: for so it must be, if the addition of Circumcision made it unto them an *Adam's* Covenant of Works. But this would be a direct contradiction to the words of the *Apostle*, speaking of them who were under



der the Covenant of Circumcision, *Acts* 15. 11. *But we believe, that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, we shall be saved even as they.* If he say, they stood indeed under that Covenant, as a pure Covenant of Works, but were saved by another Covenant; and so for many Ages the Church of God stood absolutely under the Covenant of Works, and at the same time under the pure Covenant of Grace; the one altogether absolute and free, the other wholly conditional: and though these two be in their own natures inconsistent and destructive of each other, yet so it was, that all the Saints for many Ages were absolutely under the one, and yet purely under the other: shall I be then censured for saying he speaks pure contradiction?

Possibly my Reader will be tempted to think I abuse him, and that no man of common sense can be guilty of such an horrid Absurdity. I must, whatever respect I have for Mr. C. once more tell him before the World, that this is not only his own Doctrine, but that very Doctrine upon which he hath adventured the whole Cause and Controversie of Infants Baptism, which I therefore say is hereby become a desperate Cause.

And

And this brings me to my first general Head, viz.

I. First, *That Mr. Cary hath not been able to free his Thesis from this borrid absurdity; but by struggling to do it, hath (according to the nature of Errors) entangled himself in more and greater ones.*

Mr. Cary, in p. 174, 175. of his *Solemn Call*, was by me reduced to this Absurdity, which he there owns in express words, "*That Moses, and the whole body of the People of Israel, were absolutely under (without the exception of any) the severest penalties of a dreadful Curse; and that the Sinai Covenant could be no other than a Covenant of Works, a ministration of death and condemnation; and yet at the same time, both Moses, and all the Elect, were under a pure Covenant of Gospel-grace: And if these were two contrary Covenants in themselves, and just opposite the one to the other, as indeed they were, we have nothing to say, but wish the Apostle, O the depth, &c.*"

This, Reader, is the Position which must be made good by Mr. Cary, or his Cause is lost. Deformed Issues do not look as if they had beautiful Truth for their Mother. No false or absurd Con-

clusion can regularly follow from true Premisses: But hence naturally and necessarily follows this

*Absurdity I.*

That *Abraham*, *Moses*, and all the Believers under the *Old Testament*, by standing absolutely under *Adam's* Covenant of Works, as a ministration of death and condemnation; and at the same time purely under the Covenant of Grace (as Mr. C. affirms they did) must necessarily, during their lives, hang midway betwixt Life and Death, Justification and Condemnation; and after death, midway betwixt Heaven and Hell. During life, they could neither be justified nor condemned. Justified they could not be, for Justification is the Soul's passing from death to life, 1 *John* 3. 14. *John* 5. 24. Upon a man's justification his Covenant and State are changed; but the Covenant and State of no man can be so changed as long as he remains absolutely under the severest Penalties and condemnation of the Law, as Mr. C. affirms they did.

Again, Condemned they could not be, seeing all that are under the pure Covenant of Grace (as he saith they were  
at

at the same time) are certainly in Christ; and to such there is no condemnation, *Rom.* 8. 1. nor ever shall be: *Joh.* 5. 24. *He that believeth, shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.* What remains then, but that during life, they could neither be perfectly justified, nor perfectly condemned; and yet being absolutely under the severest Penalties of *Adam's* Covenant, they were perfectly condemned; and again, being under the pure Covenant of Grace, they must be perfectly justified?

And then after death, they must neither go to Heaven, nor Hell; but either be annihilated, or stick mid-way in *Limbo Patrum* (as the *Papists* fancy) betwixt both. No condemned Person goes to Heaven, nor any justified Person to Hell. His *Position* therefore, which necessarily infers this gross Absurdity, is justly renounced and detested by Learned and Orthodox Divines.

The Learned and Acute *Turretine*, Turret. the late famous Professor of Divinity at *Geneva*, proving that the *Sinai* Law could not be a pure Covenant of Works, brings this very *Medium* to prove it, as a known truth, allowed by all men. *“The Israelites* (saith he) *with whom*  
Turret. pars 2<sup>da</sup>, pag. 290.

“ God covenanted, were already under  
 “ *Abraham's* Covenant, which was a Co-  
 “ venant of Grace; and were saved in  
 “ Christ by it; therefore they could not  
 “ be under the Legal Covenant. *Nemo*  
 “ *enim simul potest duobus fœderibus totâ*  
 “ *specie distinctis subesse*; because no man  
 “ can be under two Covenants specifically  
 “ different at the same time, as these two  
 “ are.

Mr. Strong  
 on the Co-  
 venant,  
 p. 66, 67.

That Great and Renowned Divine  
 Mr. *William Strong*, gives four irrefra-  
 gable Arguments to prove, that no man  
 can stand under both these Covenants at  
 the same time, which in co-ordination  
 actually destroy and make void each o-  
 ther. “ If the First Covenant stand,  
 “ there is no place for the Second; and  
 “ if the Second stand, the first is made  
 “ void. And this (saith he) will fully ap-  
 “ pear, if we consider the direct contrarie-  
 “ ty in the terms of those two Covenants.  
 “ For (1.) the Righteousness of the  
 “ first Covenant is in our selves; but the  
 “ Righteousness of the Second is the  
 “ Righteousness of another, 1 *Joh.* 5. 11.  
 “ 12. (2.) In the Covenant of Works,  
 “ acceptance is first of the Works, and  
 “ afterwards of the Person; *Gen.* 4. 7.  
 “ but in the Covenant of Grace, the ac-  
 ceptation

“ ceptation is first of the Person, and  
 “ then of the Work, *Gen.* 4. 4. (3.) The  
 “ First Covenant was a Covenant with-  
 “ out a *Priest*, but the Second is a Cove-  
 “ nant with a *Priest*. (4.) In the First  
 “ Covenant there is matter of glorying,  
 “ but in the Second there is none, *Rom.*  
 “ 3. 27. So that these two can never  
 “ consist, except you can compound, or  
 “ reconcile these four Opposites in the ju-  
 “ stification of the same Person.

To the same purpose, saith that Ex-  
 cellent Mr. *Samuel Bolton*. “ If the Law Bolton's  
Bounds,  
P. 133.  
 “ were a Covenant of Works, then were  
 “ the *Jews* under a different Covenant  
 “ from us, and so none of them were  
 “ saved, which the Apostle gainsays,  
 “ *Acts* 15. 11. or else they were both un-  
 “ der a Covenant of Works, and a Cove-  
 “ nant of Grace. But that they could  
 “ not be; they are utterly inconsistent.  
*Ergo.* And thus all sound Divines speak.  
 I may therefore say of Mr. *Cary's* *Posi-*  
*tion*, as *Ruvens* before me did, *omnem ab-*  
*surditatem excedere videtur*, it seemeth to  
 exceed all Absurdities. A man may more  
 rationally suppose two Natures and es-  
 sential Forms in one Body, and place the  
 same thing under divers *Species* in the  
*predicament of substance*: yea, 'twere more  
 M 4 tolerable

tolerable to affirm, That *ex duobus entibus per se fit unum ens per se*, than to place any (as Mr. C. places all) of God's People under two opposite Covenants. If Mr. C. were absolutely under the condemnation of the Law, would he not be purely justified, think you? Yet he places *Abraham, Moses*, and all Believers with them, absolutely under the severest condemnation of the Law, and the pure Gospel-Covenant, at once.

But to cover the shame and nakedness of his Assertion, which places Believers absolutely under *Adam's* Covenant, he is fain to make use of two *Fig-leaves*, as *Adam* did.

(1.) And the first attempt he now makes, p. 4, 5, 6, 7. of his *Reply*, is by way of retortion, by telling us, "That  
 "the same pretended Absurdities do fall as  
 "heavily, and a great deal more, on our  
 "Doctrine, who affirm the Sinai Law (com-  
 "plexly taken) to be a Covenant of Faith,  
 "or Grace, than upon his who makes them  
 "two essentially different Covenants: be-  
 "cause we are forced to comprize perfect  
 "doing, with the curse for non-performance,  
 "under the same Covenant with believing:  
 "and that it cannot be denied but that all  
 "the People of God were absolutely under  
 "the

"the Sinai Covenant, Gal. 3. 23. and  
"Gal. 4. 4, 5. and consequently under the  
"curse, Gal. 3. 10. This is the sum  
and substance of his first Answer.

I will not be tempted to expose my *Reply*.  
Neighbour to derision for this his strange  
Answer; but rather propound two sober  
*Queries* to him, and the Reader, viz.  
(1.) What Orthodox Divines he ever  
met with, and what are their names,  
who are forced to comprize perfect do-  
ing, with the curse for non-performance,  
under the same Covenant with believing:  
and so make the two opposite Covenants  
to be specifically one and the same? Name  
your Men, with their Books and Pages;  
or retract with shame and sorrow what  
you have here abusively affirmed of them.  
*Cameron* indeed makes it a subservient  
Covenant; the most a true, though ob-  
scure Covenant of Grace; but none com-  
prize *Adam's* Covenant with its Curse, in  
the New Covenant. (2.) Whether it be  
imaginable, That the same Absurdity can  
follow from their Doctrine, that make the  
whole complex body of the *Sinai Law* a  
Covenant of Grace, though more ob-  
scure, and so place all the People of God  
in those Ages under it; as does necessa-  
rily follow his Doctrine, who makes it a  
pure



pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works, and places the Church of God absolutely under the curse of it, and also under the pure Covenant of Grace at the same time? If Grace and Grace (how different soever in degrees of manifestation) be as opposite and repugnant, as Grace and Works, as Justification and Condemnation are, 'tis time for me to lay down my Pen; for I have certainly lost my Understanding to guide it any further.

But Mr. *Cary* will say, If you do not, yet Mr. *Roberts* doth comprize both in one Covenant. I say, you abuse Mr. *Roberts* in so affirming: for he saith in that very place you refer to \*, That believing in Christ was ultimately and chiefly intended in the *Sinai* Covenant; and perfect doing was only urged upon *Israel* in subordination and tendency to that believing. And upon that ground it is he affirms that Covenant to be a Covenant of Faith, and so denominates it from the chief scope and intent of it. He sets not *doing* and *believing* in co-ordination, or places the Church under two opposite Covenants, as you do; but places the Law, where it ought to be placed, in subordination to Faith and Christ. And therefore you have abused that good Man,

as

\* *Roberts*  
on the Co-  
venant,  
pag. 775,  
776, 777.

as well as me, and your self most of all in this your first impertinent and silly Answer.

(2.) But you have one Evasion more, p. 7. where you say, "*That how harsh and dreadful soever the Terms or Conditions of the Legal Covenant were to those that were under it, as Moses, and the whole body of the Israelites, then were; yet the grace of the Gospel-Covenant far superseded, and was by far more victorious, powerful, and efficacious, Rom. 5. 17, 20.*"

Worse and worse. Your Discourse Reply. mends like fower *Ale* in *Summer*. Here you fancy the two Covenants (under which you place the whole Church of God) to be in a conflict one with the other; Condemnation and Justification strugling one with another, as I told you before they would: but however, the Grace of the New Covenant prevails at last, and gets the victory over the Covenant of Works. Very good; but then pray, Sir, if you please, answer me a plain Question or two at your leisure.

*First*, How far did the Covenant of Grace prevail against the Covenant of Works? Was it so far prevalent and victorious as utterly to vanquish and disannul it,

it, as a Covenant of Works to them? or was it not? Was the Victory you speak of, a compleat, or a partial one? If you say it was incompleat and partial, then you leave them (as I told you before you must) partly under the Promise, and partly under the Curse; justified in part, and condemned in part. But if you say, it was a compleat and perfect Victory, then it utterly dissolved its obligation as a Covenant of Works; then they did not remain under two opposite Covenants, as you affirmed they did; but on their believing, changed their state with their Covenant, as we affirm they did.

*Secondly*, If you say, it did not totally free them from the Curse of the Covenant of Works, but however prevailed so far that they were not actually damned by vertue of the Curse; then be pleased to answer me one Question more, *How it was possible for them to be absolutely under the Curse of the Law (as you affirmed they were) and yet that Curse to be so superseded by the Covenant of Grace, as here you speak?*

*To supersede the Curse* (though it be a Phrase I never met with before) if it signify any thing, it must signify this; That  
the

the Covenant of Grace caused the Law to omit, forbear, or give over to curse that People any more. But did, or can the Law forbear or cease to curse those that are absolutely under it as a ministration of death and condemnation? Pray consult, *Rom.* 3. 19. and *Gal.* 3. 10. Are you aware what you say, when you place Believers absolutely under the Curse of the Law, and then talk of the New Covenant's victory over it; and after all this, leave them as you do, absolutely under the cursing power of the one; and still under the victorious grace of the other? For shame, my Friend, give up your absurd notion, and repent of this folly. I would not willingly shame you before the World; I did all that lay in me to prevent it. But however, *Pudor est medicina pudoris*, the only way you have left me to prevent your glorying in your shame, is this way, to make you ashamed of your vain-glory. As for that Scripture you alledge to countenance your fancy, *Rom.* 5. 17, 20. you might to as good purpose have opened your Bible, and have taken the first Scripture that came to hand, and it would have done your *Position* less harm. For the Apostle's scope there, is to demonstrate

strate the perfection of the abounding Righteousness of Christ, for the full discharge of Believers from the guilt of sin, and curse of *Adam's* Covenant; and cuts the throat of your *Position*, which it is alledged to prove.

I have stood the longer upon the clearing of this first Point; because this being fully cleared, it runs through and clears the whole Controversy betwixt us. For now it will be evident to all, That neither *Abraham's*, nor *Moses* his Covenant (complexly taken, as Mr. *Cary* takes it) could possibly be for this reason, an *Adam's* Covenant of Works; and if not a Covenant of Works, then how dark or legal soever the Dispensations of them were, they must needs be the same Covenant of Grace, for substance, under which we are, and so the main Controversy betwixt us is hereby at an end.

I know not how many Covenants of Works, or how many of Grace, Mr. *C.* fancies there are; But Orthodox Divines constantly affirm\*, That as there never were but two ways of Life to mankind, the one before the Fall, by perfect doing; the other after the Fall, by sincere believing: So answerably there can be but two Covenants betwixt God and Man-

\* *Vid.* Bolton's  
Bounds,  
p. 148.

Mankind, *viz.* the Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Grace. The last of which hath, indeed, been more obscurely Administred, and in that respect is called the Old Covenant; yet that and the New are essentially but one Covenant: And the Church of God, which for many Ages stood under that Old Covenant, did not stand under it as an *Adam's* Covenant, or the First Covenant of works, for the undeniable Reasons above given. And therefor *Abraham's* Covenant, from whence we derive our Childrens Title to Baptism, must of necessity be the very same Covenant for substance with this New Covenant, which all *Abraham's* believing off-spring, and their Infant-seed are now under. And in proving this one point, I have sufficiently confuted both Mr. C's *Solemn Call*, and this his feeble vindication of it, together.

But lest he should take this for the only Absurdity proved upon him, tho' it be tiresome to me, and must be ungrateful to him; give me leave to touch one more among many; and that the rather, because I make great use of it in this Controversy, and Mr. Cary both yields and denies it. If his own words  
be

be the Messengers of his meaning, either he, or I, must mistake their errand.

I had in my *Prolegomena*, distinguished of the Law, as strictly taken for the *Ten Commandments*; and more largely and complexly taken, as including the *Ceremonial Law*. The former I considered according to God's intention and design in the promulgation of it, which was to add it as an *Appendix* to the Promise, *Gal. 3. 19.* And the carnal *Jews* mistaking and perverting the end of the Law, and making it to themselves a Covenant of Works, by making it the very Rule and Reason of their justification before God, *Rom. 9. 32, 33. Rom. 10. 3.* I told him, That the Controversy depended upon this double sense of the Law, for that it ought not to be denominated from the abused and mistaken End of it; but from God's chief scope and design in the promulgation of it, which was to add it as an *Appendix* to the Promise, as the word *περὶ* there imports; and so must be published with Evangelical purposes. Let us now hear Mr. C's sense of this matter.

In his *Call*, p. 131. he yields the distinction in these words.

*The Jews were right enough in reference to the true nature of the Law, That it was a Covenant of Works, &c. though they were out in respect of its proper use and intention, which was not, that any should attain unto Life and Righteousness thereby; but to shew them the nature of Sin, and the Holiness and Righteousness of God; to convince them of their sin and misery without Christ, and their necessity of a Saviour; which they being ignorant of, and still going about to establish their own Righteousness which was of the Law, and*

N

In his *Reply*, p. 43. proving the Law to be a Covenant of Works, from Rom. 10. 5. he saith,

*This was the nature of it in the first sanction of it, as the fruit of God's special designation and appointment; and that it is the greatest violation and perverting of Scripture that can lightly be met with, to affirm, that this is uttered and declared by Paul, &c. only because the Jews had perverted it, and reduced it (as they thought) to its primitive intention. And again, p. 44. he saith, he hath proved that it was the same with Adam's Covenant in both respects, that is, intentionally, as well as refusing*



refusing to submit themselves unto the righteousness of God, &c. they stumbled at that stumbling stone, and were accordingly broken, snared, and taken, Rom. 9. 31, 32, 33. Rom. 10. 3. And this (saith he) was the true ground of the dispute between the Apostle and them. This was Orthodoxly spoken, and would end the Controversy, would he stand to it. But refusing to submit themselves unto the righteousness of God, &c. they stumbled at that stumbling stone, and were accordingly broken, snared, and taken, Rom. 9. 31, 32, 33. Rom. 10. 3. And this (saith he) was the true ground of the dispute between the Apostle and them. This was Orthodoxly spoken, and would end the Controversy, would he stand to it. But

*materially considered.* And once more, p. 20. he expressly denies that the Law was added as an Appendix to the Promise; calls that a crude assertion of mine; and asks me, Why it might not be added as an Appendix rather to the first Covenant of Works, to re-inforce that? And after all, gushes out many slighting and opprobrious terms upon me, which I will not throw back again, but rather leave him to reconcile himself with himself.

I shall only ask Mr. Cary a sober Question or two, instead of Recriminations, and rendring reviling for reviling.

First, How the Jews were right enough in reference to the true nature of the Law, as it was a Covenant of Works, and yet out in respect of its proper use and intention, which was not, that any should attain unto Life and Righteousness

ness by it, but to convince them of Sin, and of the necessity of a Saviour; and yet the Law be a Covenant of Works, *intentionally*, as well as *materially* considered; and that in respect of God's special designation and appointment? If God designed and appointed it in his *Sinai* dispensation, to be to them an *Adam's* Covenant of Works, then certainly they were not out (as you say they were) when they sought Righteousness by the works of it; nor could that mistake of theirs be the ground of the Controversy betwixt the *Apostle* and them: For it seems it was no mistake, being by God's intention, as well as its own primitive nature, promulged at *Sinai*, as a true *Adam's* Covenant.

*Secondly*, You deny the Law was added to the Promise, and ask me why it might not be added to the first Covenant to re-inforce that? I answer, Because the scope of the place will not bear it, nor any good Expositor countenance such a fancy. You make the *Sinai* Law to be the same with that first Covenant, and by so expounding the *Apostle*, you make him say, either that the same thing was added to it self, (which must in your own Phrase, be by a *Correspondency*

Προστίθηται  
posita, pro  
apposita,  
hoc est,  
Promissio-  
ni adjecta.  
Beza.

of Identity) or else that there are two distinct Covenants of Works (when indeed there is but one) and that the latter was added to the former. This is your way of Expounding Scripture, when driven to a streight by dint of Argument. Nothing beside such a pure necessity, could drive you upon such an Absurdity.

Vid. Dr. Reynolds, *Use of the Law*, p. 378. full up to my sense, and p. 371.

\* Dr. Crisp, Lib. 4. *Serm.* 9.

(It was added to the promise (saith Dr. Reynolds) by way of subserviency and attendance, the better to advance and make effectual the Covenant it self. Mr. Strong upon the two Covenants, saith, the Apostle's meaning is, that the Law was added as an *Appendix* to the Promise. But it may be you had rather hear Dr. Crisp's Exposition \* than his; for you say, had it been added to the Promise, it would have given life. The Doctor will at once give you the true sense of the Text, and with it a full answer to your Objection. "Though  
 "Life (saith he) be not the end of the  
 "Law, yet there are other sufficient uses of  
 "it requiring the promulgation thereof:  
 "It was published to be an *Appendix* to  
 "the Gospel, Gal. 3. 19. And this sup-  
 "poses, (1.) The priority of the Gospel  
 "to the Law. (2.) The principality of  
 "the

“the Promise of Life by Christ, above the  
 “Law. (3.) The Consistence of the Law  
 “and Gospel. They may well stand one by  
 “another, as an House, and the addition to  
 “it may. That it was with such an intention added to the Promise, I have met with no Man that had front enough to deny or scruple it before you. And that the Jews did mistake its chief scope and use, from whence we denominate it a Covenant of Grace, the generality of Godly and Learned Divines constantly affirm. See Mr. *Anth. Burges's de Lege*, p. 227. *Bolton's Bounds*, p. 160, 161. Mr. *Samuel Mather* on the *Types*, p. 11. with multitudes more, whose citations would even weary the Reader. And what you urge from Mr. *Poole's Annotations*, on 2 Cor. 3. 6, 7. it makes nothing at all to your purpose: For it is manifest the *Annotator* there, takes the Moral Law in it self, strictly taken, and as set in opposition to the Gospel, which it never was since the Fall, but by the ignorance and infidelity of unregenerate Men.

You also labour to shelter your erroneous fancy under the authority of Dr. *Owen*; but you manifestly abuse him in your Citation; for in that very place you re-

fer to, he speaks strictly of the Covenant of Works made with *Adam* in *Paradise*; and plainly distinguishes it from the *Sinai* Covenant, which sufficiently shews his judgment in this point. For these are his own words, which you suppress

Dr. Owen  
of Justifica-  
tion, p. 396,  
397. Vindi-  
cated from  
Mr. C's  
gross Misre-  
presenta-  
tions.

fed in the Citation, "*As to the Sinai Covenant and the New Testament, with their privileges thence emerging, they belong not to our present Argument.*"

This Paragraph you wilfully omit, that you might include that which his words plainly exclude. In the same place he tells you, that *David* and *Abraham's* Covenant, was for essence the Covenant of Grace, notwithstanding the variations made in it: But you take and leave, as best suits your design †.

† But if you  
will see the

Doct<sup>r</sup>'s judgment, in concurrence with all his Brethren, you have it in these very words: "*Although this Covenant hath been variously administered in respect of Ordinances and Institutions in the time of the Law, and since the coming of Christ in the flesh; yet for the substance and efficacy of it, to all its spiritual and saving ends, it is one and the same; upon the account of which various dispensations it is called the Old and New-Testament. Vide Declaration of the Faith and Order of the Congregational Churches in England, p. 15. at the Savoy, Octob. 12. 1658.*"

Once more in p. 16, 17, &c. of my *Vindicia Legis*, you find your self pinched with another *Dilemma*, from *Lev. 26. 40, 41, 46.* whence I plainly proved,  
That

That there is a Promise of Pardon found in the *Sinai* dispensation, to penitent sinners. That this Promise was given at *Mount Sinai* by the hand of *Moses*, is undeniable from *vers. 46.* That it contained the Relief of a gracious remission to penitent sinners, is as undeniable from *vers. 40, 41.* If you say, this Promise belongs to *Moses* his dispensation (as *verse 46.* tells you it did) then there is remission of Sins found in the *Sinai* Laws. If you say, it only refers to *Abraham's* Covenant of Grace; then that Covenant of Grace appears to be conditional, which you utterly deny.

Now what is your Reply to this? (1.) You object my own words in *the Method of Grace*, p. 326. as if you had never read the just and fair Vindication I had before given you of them, p. 134, 135. of my first Reply to you. At this rate Men may continue Controversies to the Worlds end. Sir, there are many Witnesses, that you are very well acquainted with my *Method of Grace*. (2.) You say, p. 31. of your Reply, That that Covenant could not be conditional, *because a Condition implies merit either of congruity or condignity.* This is a further discovery of your ignorance of

the nature of *Conditions*, as well as *Covenants*: But that Point belonging to the last Head of Controversy between us, I shall refer it thither.

It were easie for me to instance in many more Absurdities which Mr. C. cannot eluctate, and to prove them upon him as easily as to name them. But I will not press him too far; what hath been named and proved already, is more than enough to convince the Reader, that my first Argument is left standing in its full force and strength against him, *viz.*

*Argument I.*

That Proposition can never be true, which necessarily draws many and horrid gross absurdities after it by just consequence. But so doth this: *Ergo.*

*Argument II.*

My next *Argument*, *Vindicie*, &c. p. 27. is as secure as the first. It was this. If *Adam's* Covenant had one end, namely, the Happiness and Justification of Men by their own Obedience, and the Law at *Sinai* had quite another end, namely to bring Sinners to Christ by Faith for their Righteousness; the one  
to

to keep him within himself, the other to take him quite out of himself; then the *Sinai Law* cannot possibly be the same with *Adam's Covenant of Works in Paradise*.

But so stands the Case, *Rom.* 10. 4. *Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.*

Therefore they cannot be the same, but two different Covenants.

All that touches this *Argument*, is but three Lines in the 49th page of your Reply; where you say you have sufficiently answered and cleared this in *p.* 169, 172. of your former Discourse, from the corrupt interpretation by me fastened thereon.

Now, if the Reader will give himself the trouble to examine those Pages, he shall find that Mr. C. there allows that very interpretation which he here calls corrupt; and saith it comes all to one reckoning with his own. If this will overthrow my second *Argument*, it is gone.

### *Argument III.*

My third *Argument* was drawn from *Acts* 7. 38. in this Form:

If



If Christ himself were the *Angel* by whom the Laws were delivered to *Moses*, which are there called *the lively Oracles of God*; then the Law cannot be a pure *Adam's Covenant of Works*: For it is never to be imagined, that ever Jesus Christ himself should deliver to *Moses* such a Covenant directly opposite to all the ends of his future Incarnation.

But it is more than probable from that Text, that it was Christ which delivered the Law to *Moses* on the *Mount*. *Ergo*.

To this *Argument* he saith not one word in *p. 49.* of his *Reply*, where he cites a part of it, nibbling a little at that expression [*The lively Oracles of God*], thinking it unimaginable the *Sinai Law* should be such; when as the Apostle *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 10.* found the Commandment to be unto death; and the Apostle *2 Cor. 3. 6, 7.* calls it a *Ministration of death*. I must therefore leave Mr. C. to reconcile those two Scriptures. And withal, I must tell him, that *Spanhemius* gives the same sense I do of *Acts 7. 38.* as the current judgment of Christians against the *Jews*, That it was not a created *Angel*, but Christ himself.

Fr. Spanhem.  
Elench.  
Controvers.  
P. 552.

Argu-

## Argument IV.

The last *Argument* I urged, was from *Rom.* 9. 4. and thus it may run.

No such Covenant as by the Fall had utterly lost all its Promises, Privileges, and Blessings, and could retain nothing but Curses and Punishments, could possibly be numbred among the chief Privileges in which God's *Israel* gloried.

But the Law given at *Sinai* was numbred among their chief privileges, *Rom.* 9. 4. *Ergo.*

To this he only saith, *p.* 57. of his Reply, " That the Law, even as it was  
 " a Covenant of Works, was a privilege inestimable, beyond what all others  
 " enjoyed; because the very Curses and  
 " Punishments annexed thereunto, in  
 " case of the least failure, were of excellent use to convince them of their  
 " sin and misery without Christ, and  
 " their necessity therefore of a Saviour;  
 " which was the proper work of the  
 " Law, as a Covenant of works; which  
 " advantage all other Nations wanting,  
 " it might well be numbred among the  
 " chief Privileges they were invested  
 " with.

But

But (1.) If the Law were intended by God, to be an *Adam's* Covenant to them (as Mr. C. saith it was) where then is the Privilege of God's *Israel* above other Nations? (2.) If their Privilege consisted in the subserviency of that Law to Christ (as he here intimates it did) then he yields the thing I contend for. For this being its chief scope and end, we do hence justly denominate it a Covenant of Grace, though more obscure and legally administred. And in this judgment most of our solid Divines concur. Mr. *Charnock* on the *Attributes*, p. 390. is clear and judicious in the point. Mr. *Samuel Bolton*, in that excellent Book called, *The Bounds of Christian Liberty*, gives nine solid Arguments to prove the Law was not set up at *Sinai* as a Covenant of Works. Mr. *Anth. Burgess* gives us six Arguments to prove the same Conclusion. Mr. *Greenhill* on *Ezek. 16.* gives us demonstration from that Context, That since it was a Marriage-Covenant, as it appears to be v. 8. it cannot possibly be a distinct Covenant from the Covenant of Grace. The incomparable *Turretine* Learnedly and Judiciously states this Controversy; and both positively asserts, and by many Arguments

Bolton's  
Bounds, p.  
130, &c.

Burgess,  
de Lege,  
p. 225.  
Greenhill,  
in Loc.

Turret-  
tine, part  
2. p. 288,  
289.

ments fully proves, That the *Sinai* Law cannot be a pure Covenant of Works, or a Covenant specifically distinct from the Covenant of Grace. It were easie to fill Pages with Allegations of this kind; but I hope what hath been said, may suffice for this Point.

But still Mr. *Cary* complains, that I have all this while but threatned his *Arguments* to prove them fallacious, or to have four Terms in them; and therefore he hath drawn out some select *Arguments*, as he calls them, *p.* 37. to try my skill upon. I will neither tire my Reader in a foolish chase of such weak and impertinent *Arguments* as he there produceth, nor yet wholly neglect them, lest he glory in them as unanswerable. And therefore to shew him the fate of the rest, I will only touch his first Argument, which being his *Argumentum Palmarium*, deservedly leads the Van to all the rest. And thus it runs upon all four.

That Covenant that is not of Faith, must needs be a Covenant of Works, yea, the very same for substance with that made with *Adam*.

But the Scripture is express, That the Law is not of Faith, *Gal.* 3. 12. Ergo.

The

*Reply.* The *Law* is considered two ways in Scripture. (1.) Largely, for the whole *Mosaical Oeconomy*, comprehensive of the Ceremonial as well as Moral Precepts; and that Law is of Faith, as the Learned *Turretine* hath proved by four

\* *Lex dicitur non esse ex fide, Gal. 3. 12. non ut latè sumitur prout notat Oeconomiam Mosaicam; sed strictè, quum sumitur pro Lege Morali abstracte, & seorsum à promissionibus gratiæ, quomodo illam intelligebant Justiciarii, qui vitam ex eâ querebant. Nam fidem etiam in fœdere Sinaitico præceptam fuisse evincitur, &c.*

Scripture *Arguments*, Pars secunda, p. 292, 293. \* Because it contained Christ the Object of Faith, &c. Because it impelled men to seek Christ by Faith. Because it required that God be worshipped, which he cannot rightly be without Faith. And because *Paul* describes the Righteousness

of Faith in those very words whereby *Moses* had declared the Precepts of the Law, *Deut. 30. 11, 12, 13*. Again, the Law in Scripture is taken *strictly* for the *Moral Law* only, considered abstractly from the promises of Grace, as the *Legal Justiciaries* understood it. These are two far different senses and acceptations of the Law. Your *Major Proposition* takes the Law in its large complex body, as appears by your 3<sup>d</sup> page. Your *Minor Proposition*, which you would confirm by *Gal. 3. 12.* takes the Law strictly

ly and abstractly, as it is set disjunctly from, yea in opposition to Faith and the Promises, and so there are two sorts of *Law* in your *Argument*, and consequently your *Argument* is fallacious, as all its fellows be, and runs (as I told you before) upon all four.

I hope this may suffice with respect to the *Sinai* Covenant controverted betwixt me and my Neighbour, to evince that it cannot be what he asserts it to be, even an *Adam's* Covenant of Works: and that I have discharged what I undertook to prove with respect to this Covenant, namely, That Mr. C. cannot free his *Position* from the gross Absurdities with which I loaded it, but endeavouring to do that, hath incurred many more: that his *Reply* hath left my Arguments standing in their full strength against him: and that the *Position* I have set up against him, is well founded in Scripture; and hath the general concurrence and consent of Learned, Holy and Orthodox Divines.

To conclude, Let the grave and learned Dr. Edw. Reynolds, in his excellent *Treatise of the Use of the Law*, determine this Controversy betwixt us, p. 371, &c. where designedly handling this Doctrine from Rom. 7. 13. "That the Law

"was

- "was revived and promulgated anew on  
 "Mount Sinai by the Ministry of Moses,  
 "with no other than Evangelical and mer-  
 "ciful purposes, he abundantly confirms  
 my Sense and *Arguments*, and saves me  
 the labour of refuting the principal, and  
 most of yours : where carrying before  
 him the whole Context of *Gal.* 3. from  
 the 15th to the 23d, he clearly carries  
 his Doctrine with it, proving from *v.* 15.  
 "That God's Covenant with *Abraham*  
 "was perpetual and immutable, and  
 "therefore all other subsequent Acts of  
 "God (such as the giving of the Law  
 "was) do some way or other refer unto  
 P. 376. "it. (2.) From *v.* 16. he further proves,  
 "That as God's Covenant with *Abra-*  
 "*ham* is most constant in regard of the  
 "wisdom and unvariableness of him that  
 "made it ; so it can never expire for want  
 P. 377. "of a Seed to whom it is made. (3.) From  
 "*v.* 17. he proves, that if another Law  
 "be made after the Promise, which *pri-*  
 "*ma specie*, and in strict construction,  
 "doth imply a contradiction to the terms  
 "and nature of the former Law ; then it  
 "is certain, that this latter Law must be  
 "understood in some other sense, and  
 "admit of some other subordinate use,  
 "which may well consist with the being  
 "and

" and force of the former Covenant.  
 "(4.) From v. 18. he proves, that the com-  
 " ing of the Law hath not voided the Pro-  
 " mise, and that the Law is not of force (as  
 " you vainly dream) towards the Seed to  
 " whom the Promise is made; and there-  
 " fore if it be not to stand in a contradi-  
 " ction, it follows that it must stand in  
 " subordination to the Gospel; and so to  
 " tend to Evangelical Purposes. (5.) He  
 further proves his Conclusion from v. 19.  
 which shews for what end the Law was  
 added, *προσέτεθη*. " It was not (saith  
 " he) set up alone, as a thing in gross  
 " by it self; as an adequate, compleat,  
 " solid Rule of Righteousness, as it was  
 " given to *Adam* in *Paradise*: much less  
 " was it published to void and disannul  
 " any precedent Covenant; but so far  
 " was it from abrogating, that it was  
 " added to the Promise by way of subser-  
 " viency, and attendance; the better to  
 " advance and make effectual the Cove-  
 " nant it self; and that until the Seed  
 " should come, which whether it respect  
 " Christ personal, or mystical; in either  
 " sense (saith he) it confirms the point  
 " we are upon, *viz. That the Law hath*  
 "*Evangelical purposes.* If the Seed be  
 " understood of the Person of Christ,  
 O " then



- “ then this shews that the Law was put  
 “ to the Promise, the better to raise and  
 “ stir up in men the expectations of  
 “ Christ, the promised Seed. But if we  
 “ understand by Seed, the *Faithful*  
 P. 379. “ (which I rather approve); then the A-  
 “ postle’s meaning is this ; That as long  
 “ as any are either to come into the uni-  
 “ ty of Christ’s Body, and have the Co-  
 “ venant of Grace applied to them, &c.  
 “ so long there will be use of the Law,  
 “ both to the Unregenerate, to make  
 “ them fly to Christ, and those that are  
 “ already called, that they may learn to  
 “ cast all their faith, hope, and expecta-  
 “ tion of Righteousness upon him still.  
 P. 380. “ This then manifestly shews, that there  
 “ was no other intention in publishing  
 “ the Law, but with reference to the  
 “ Seed : that is, with Evangelical pur-  
 “ poses to shew mercy : not with refe-  
 “ rence to those that perish, who would  
 “ have had condemnation enough with-  
 “ out the Law. And further strengthens  
 his Conclusion from the last words of  
*vers.* 19. “ That it was ordained by An-  
 “ gels in the hand of a *Mediator*. This  
 “ (saith he) evidently declares, That the  
 “ Law was published in mercy and pa-  
 “ cification, not in fury or revenge ;  
 “ (for

“ (for the work of a *Mediator* is to nego-  
 “ tiate peace, and treat of reconcilment  
 “ between Parties offended) whereas, if  
 “ the Lord had intended death in the  
 “ publishing of the Law, he would not  
 “ have proclaimed it in the hand of a  
 “ *Mediator*, but of an *Executioner*.  
 “ (6.) From *vers.* 20. Those words P. 381.  
 “ (saith he) shew why the Law was  
 “ published in the hand of a *Mediator*,  
 “ viz. that they should not despair and  
 “ sink under the fear of his Wrath. For  
 “ as he made a Covenant of Promise to  
 “ *Abraham*, and his Seed; so he is the  
 “ same *God* still, one in his grace and  
 “ mercy towards Sinners. *God is one*,  
 “ i. e. in sending this *Mediator*, he doth  
 “ declare to Mankind, that he is at peace  
 “ and unity with them again. *Moses*  
 “ was the Representative, and *Christ*  
 “ the substantial and real *Mediator*.  
 “ *God is one*, i. e. he carries the same P. 382.  
 “ purpose and intention both in the Law  
 “ and in the Gospel; namely, benevo- P. 384.  
 “ lence, and desire of reconcilment with  
 “ men. (7.) To sum up all that hath  
 “ been spoken touching the use of the  
 “ Law in a plain similitude; Suppose  
 “ we a *Prince* should proclaim a Pardon  
 “ to all *Traitors*, if they would come in  
 O 2 “and

- “and plead it; and after this, should send  
 “forth his Officers to attach, imprison,  
 “examine, convince, arraign, threaten  
 “and condemn them: is he now contra-  
 “ry to himself? hath he repented of his  
 “Mercy? No, but he is unwilling to  
 “lose his Mercy, desirous to have the  
 “honour of his Mercy acknowledged  
 “unto him. The same is the Case be-  
 “tween God and us. To *Abraham* he  
 “made a promise of Mercy and Blessed-  
 “ness to all that would plead interest in it,  
 “for the remission of their Sins; but men  
 “were secure and heedless of their  
 P. 385. “Estate, &c. Hereupon the Lord pub-  
 “lished by *Moses* a severe and terrible  
 “Law; yet in all this, God doth but  
 “pursue his first purpose of mercy, and  
 “take a course to make his Gospel ac-  
 “counted worthy of all acceptation;  
 “which clears the general point, *That*  
 “*God in the publication of the Law by*  
 “*Moses on Mount Sinai, had none but*  
 “*Merciful and Evangelical Intentions.*  
 “And once more; The Law was not  
 “published by *Moses on Mount Sinai*, as  
 P. 386. “it was given to *Adam in Paradise*, to  
 “justify, or to save men. And p. 385.  
 “it is not given, *ex primaria intentione*,  
 “to condemn men. In consequence to  
 “all

“all which he saith, p. 388, 389. that  
 “to preach the Law alone by it self, is  
 “to pervert the use of it; neither have  
 “we any power or commission so to do.  
 “It was published as an *Appendant* to  
 “the Gospel, and so must it be preached.  
 “It was published in the hand of a *Me-*  
 “*diator*, and must be preached in the  
 “hand of a *Mediator*. It was published  
 “Evangelically, and it must be so  
 “preached.

See how this agrees now with p. 173.  
 of your *Call*, and how the several parts  
 of the discourse of this sound and emi-  
 nent *Doctor* (which I have been forced  
 to sum up and contract) do abundantly  
 confute your vain Notions of the Law,  
 and cut the very nerves of your best Ar-  
 guments, if they had any nerves in them:  
 for indeed it is *moles absque nervis*.

It were easy for me to represent the  
 Sense of many other eminent Divines in  
 perfect harmony with the Doctrine of  
 this great and excellent *Divine*, who hath  
 substantially proved the Point I defend  
 against you: but 'tis enough.

II. Let us next examine what execu-  
 tion his *Reply* hath done upon my second  
*Position*, set up in direct opposition to  
 him; namely, *That God's Covenant with*

*Abraham's* Abraham, Gen. 17. unto which Circumci-  
*Covenant,* sion was annexed, is, for its substance, the  
*Gen. 17.* self-same Covenant of Grace with that  
*the Cove-* which Gentile-believers and their Infant-  
*nant of* seed are now under.  
*Grace.*

Here I have abundant cause again to complain, that Mr. C. hath so formed his Answers, as if he had never read the Book he undertakes a Reply to. And I do verily believe, the greatest part of his Reply was made at random, before ever my printed Book was in his hands. For he hath not at all considered the state of the Question as I there gave it him; nor kept himself to the just and necessary Rules of Disputation, as I earnestly desired he would. However, 'tis not Complaints, but confirmation and vindication of my Arguments, which is my proper work. I shall therefore recite them briefly, and vindicate and confirm them strongly; contracting all into as few words as can express the sense and Argument of the Point before me.

#### *Argument I.*

If Circumcision be a part of the Ceremonial Law, and the Ceremonial Law was dedicated by Blood; and whatsoever is so dedicated, is by you confessed to be  
 no

no part of the Covenant of Works: then *Vindiciæ*  
Circumcision can be no part of the Co- *Legis, &c.*  
venant of Works, even by your own *P. 42.*  
confession. But it is so. *Ergo.*

To this Mr. Cary returns a *Tragical Reply.*  
*Complaint* instead of a *Rational Answer.* *P. 68.*  
*Insinuates my falsehood and gross abuse of*  
*him. Appeals to his Reader. Tells him*  
*I have taken a liberty to say what I please,*  
*as if there were no future Judgment to be*  
*regarded. And that I can expect no com-*  
*fort another day without repentance now.*  
*For those things that have thus passed be-*  
*twixt him and me, shall again be revised,*  
*and set in order before me. That he is*  
*weary of noting my Miscarriages of this*  
*kind. That there is hardly a Page or Pa-*  
*ragraph in my whole Reply, but abounds*  
*with Transgressions of this nature. He begs*  
*the Lord to forgive me; and wishes he could*  
*say, Father, forgive him, for he knows*  
*not what he doth; as if my Sin were*  
*greater than the Sin of those that stoned*  
*Stephen, or crucified Christ.*

Either I am *guilty* or *innocent* in the *Reply.*  
matters here charged upon me by Mr. C.  
If *guilty*, I promise him an ingenuous  
acknowledgment. If *innocent*, (as both  
my Conscience, and his own Book will  
prove me to be) then I shall only say, *he*

knoweth not what spirit he is of. The Case must be tried by his own Book, and it will quickly be decided. These are the very words in his *Solemn Call*, p. 148. "He (that is, Mr. Sedgwick) makes no distinction betwixt the Ceremonial Covenant that was dedicated with blood, and the Law written in stones that was not so dedicated. How strangely doth he confound and obscure the word and truth of God, which ought to have been cleared and distinctly declared to those he had preached or written to? With much more, p. 149, 150, 151. where he saith, "It's plain, that the Law written in Stones, and the Book wherein the Statutes and Judgments were contained, were two distinct Covenants, and delivered at distinct seasons, and in a distinct method; the one with, the other without a Mediator; the one dedicated with blood and sprinkling, the other (that we read of) not so dedicated.

Now let the Reader judge whether I have deserved such Tragical Complaints and dreadful Charges for inferring from these words, That the Ceremonial Law being by him pronounced a distinct Covenant from the Moral Law, which he makes all one with *Adam's* Covenant; delivered

delivered at a distinct season, and in a distinct method ; the Ceremonial Law with a *Mediator*, the Moral Law without a *Mediator* ; the Ceremonial Law dedicated with blood and sprinkling, the Moral Law not so dedicated : let him judge ( I say ) whether I have wronged him in saying, that by his own confession, Circumcision being a part of this Ceremonial Law, it can therefore be no part of the Covenant of Works ?

But Mr. Cary hath two things to say for himself. (1.) That in the same place he makes the Ceremonial Law no other than a *Covenant of Works* : And the wrong I have done him, is by not distinguishing (as he did) betwixt *A Covenant of Works*, and *The Covenant of Works*. Here it seems lies my guilt upon which this dreadful out-cry against me is made. Exception.

But if I should chance to prove, that there never was, is, or can be any more than one Covenant of Works ; and that any other Covenant which is distinguished from it (as he confesses the Ceremonial Law was) by a Mediator, and the blood of sprinkling, can be no part of that Covenant of Works : what then will become of Mr. C's distinction of *A Covenant of Works*, and *The Covenant of Works* ? Reply.



*Works?* Now the matter is plain and evident, That as there never were, are, or can be more than two common Heads appointed by God, namely *Adam*, and *Christ*, 1 Cor. 15. 45, 46, 47, 48. Rom. 5. 15, 17, 18, 19. so it is impossible there should be more than two Covenants, under which Mankind stands, under these two common Heads. And the First Covenant once broken, it is utterly impossible that fallen Man should ever attain life that way, or that ever God should set it up again with such an intention and scope, *unless* (as Mr. Charnock speaks) *he had reduced man's Body to the dust, and his Soul to nothing, and framed another man to have governed him by a Covenant of Works; but that had not been the same man that had revolted, and upon his revolt was stained and disabled.* If Mr. C. therefore be not able to prove more Covenants of Works with Mankind than one, let him rather blush at his silly distinction betwixt a Covenant of Works, and the Covenant of Works. For indeed he makes at least four distinct Covenants of Works, one with *Adam*, two with *Moses*; one Moral, the other Ceremonial; and a fourth with *Abraham* at the institution of Circumcision, Gen. 17.

Charnock  
on the At-  
tributes,  
p. 390.

(2.) If

(2.) If it appear (as it clearly doth) that as there never was, is, or can be any more than one Covenant of Works, so whatsoever Covenant is distinguished from it by a Mediator, and dedication by the sprinkling of blood (as he saith the Ceremonial Law was) cannot possibly, for the Reasons he gives, be any part or member of *Adam's* Covenant of Works; then, I hope, I have done M. C. no wrong in my assumption from his own words, for which he so reviles and abuses me. But this will appear as plain as the Noon-day-light: for a Covenant with a Mediator, and dedicated by sprinkling of blood, doth, and necessarily must essentially difference such a Covenant from that Covenant that had no Mediator, nor dedication by blood. To deny this, were to confound Law and Gospel, *Adam's* and Christ's Covenant; but the distinction betwixt them is his own, therefore my assumption was just. That this blood was typically the blood of Christ, and that the Holy Ghost signified the one by the other, is plain from *Heb. 9. 7, 8.* And I never met with that man that scrupled it before Mr. *Cary*. So then my first *Argument* to prove *Abraham's* Covenant of Circumcision to be the Covenant  
of

of Grace, and not an *Adam's* Covenant, or any part thereof, stands firm after Mr. C's passionate *Reply*, which I hope the Lord will pardon to him, though he had scarce Charity enough left to desire a pardon for his Friend, who had neither wronged the Truth, nor him.

*Argument II.*

My second *Argument* was this. If Circumcision was the seal of the Righteousness of Faith, it did not pertain to the Covenant of Works; for the Righteousness of Faith and Works are opposite.

But Circumcision was the Seal of the Righteousness of Faith, *Rom. 4. 11.*  
*Ergo.*

The sum of what he answers to this, p. 72, 73, &c. (as far as I can pick his true sense out of a multitude of needless words) is this. "*He confesses this Argument seems very plausible; but however, Abraham was a Believer before Circumcision; and tho indeed it sealed the Righteousness of Faith to him, yet it sealed it to him only as the Father of Believers: and denies that ever Jacob, or Isaac, or any others enrolled in that Covenant, were sealed by it; but to all the rest beside Abraham, it was rather a token of servitude*"

"*rude and bondage.* This is the sum and substance of his Reply.

But, Sir, let me ask you two or three *Reply.*  
plain *Questions.* (1.) What is the reason you silently slide over the *Question* I asked you, *p. 41.* of my *Vindicia, &c*? Did you find it an hot *Iron*, which you durst not touch? 'Tis like you did. My *Question* was this. *Had Adam's Covenant a seal of the righteousness of faith annexed to it, as this had, Rom. 4. 11?* *The righteousness of faith is evangelical righteousness, and this Circumcision sealed.* Say not it was to *Abraham* only that it sealed it, for 'tis an injurious restriction put upon the *Seal of a Covenant* which extended to the *Fathers*, as well as to *Abraham*: however, you admit that it sealed evangelical righteousness to *Abraham*: but I hope you will not say, that a *Seal of the Covenant of Works* (for so you make *Circumcision* to be) ever did, or could seal evangelical righteousness to any individual person in the *World*.

I find you a man of great confidence, but certainly here it failed you: not one word in Reply to this. "(2.) I told "you your distinction was invented by "*Bellarmino*, and shew'd you where it "was confuted by *Dr. Ames*: but not a  
"word

“ word to that. (3.) I shew’d, That  
 “ the extending of that Seal to all Be-  
 “ lievers as well as *Abraham*, is most  
 “ agreeable to the drift and scope of the  
 “ Apostle’s Argument, which is to prove,  
 “ that both *Jews* and *Gentiles* are justified  
 “ by Faith, as *Abraham* was: and that  
 “ the ground of justification is common  
 “ to both: and that how great soever  
 “ *Abraham* was, yet in this case he hath  
 “ found nothing whereof to glory. And  
 “ is not your Exposition a notable one,  
 “ to prove the community of the privi-  
 “ ledge of Justification, because the Seal  
 “ of it was peculiar to *Abraham* alone?  
 p. 47, 48.

Sir, You have spent words enough  
 upon this Head to tire your Reader. But  
 why can I not meet with one word a-  
 mong them, that fairly advances to grap-  
 ple with my *Argument*? or answer the  
 important *Questions* before you, upon  
 which the matter depends? If this be all  
 you have to say, I must tell you, You  
 are a weak manager of a bad Cause;  
 which is the less hazard to Truth.

### *Argument III.*

In the Covenant of Circumcision,  
*Gen. 17.* God makes over himself to *A-*  
*braham,*

*brabam*, and his Seed, to be their God, or gives them a special interest in himself.

But in the Covenant of Works, God doth not since the Fall, make over himself to any to be their God by way of special interest.

Therefore the Covenant of Circumcision cannot be the Covenant of Works.

The sum of your Reply in p. 76. is under two Heads.

(1.) "You boldly tell me, That God  
"doth in the Covenant of Works make over  
"himself to Sinners to be their God by way  
"of special interest: but it being upon such  
"hard terms, that it's utterly impossible for  
"Sinners that way to attain unto life, he  
"hath therefore been pleased to abolish that,  
"and make a new Covenant: and bring  
*Exod.* 20. 2. to prove it.

This is new and strange Divinity with *Reply.*  
me. (1.) That God should become a People's God by way of special interest, by virtue of the broken Covenant of Works. This wholly alters the nature of that Covenant; for then it was a Law that could give life, contrary to *Gal.* 3. 21. unless you can suppose a Soul that's totally dead in Sin, to have a special interest in God, as his God. (2.) This Answer of yours yields the Controversy about the  
nature

nature of the *Sinai Law*: for this very Concession of yours, is the *Medium* by which our Divines prove it to be a Covenant of Grace. (3.) This Concession of yours confounds the two Covenants, by communicating the essential property and prime privilege of the Covenant of Grace, to *Adam's* Covenant of Works. Either therefore expunge *Jer.* 31. 33. as a Covenant of Grace, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*; or allow that in *Gen.* 17. 7. to be specifically the same; and that *Exod.* 20. though more obscurely delivered. (4.) "You assert, *That "God may actually become a Peoples God "by way of special interest, and yet the "salvation of that People be suspended "upon impossible terms.* You sent them before to *Purgatory*, but by this you must send them directly to *Hell*: for if the salvation of God's peculiar People be upon impossible terms, 'tis certain they cannot be saved. And lastly, It is an horrid reflection upon the Wisdom and Goodness of God, who never did, or will make any Covenant, wherein he takes fallen Men to be his peculiar People, and make over himself to be their God; and yet not make provision for their Salvation in the same Covenant,

nant, but leave their Salvation for many Ages upon hard and impossible terms; (*i. e.*) leave them under damnation.

(2.) I told you in my *Vindicia*, &c. p. 49. that you were fain to cut *Abraham's* Covenant, *Gen. 17.* into two parts; and make the first to be the pure Covenant of Grace, which is the promisory part to the 9th verse; and the Restipulation (as you call it, p. 205.) to be as pure a Covenant of Works. Which I truly said was a bold Action; and in so calling it, I gave it a softer name than the nature of it deserved.

The sum of what you reply to this, is, *Mr. C's Defence, p. 79.*  
(1.) By denying the matter of fact, and charging me with misrepresentation; and in the next page confessing the whole Charge, saying, Though the Promise and the Restipulation, mentioned *vers. 7, 8, 9.* make but one and the same Covenant of Circumcision; yet there are two Covenants mentioned in that Context, the first between God and *Abraham* himself, *vers. 2, 4.* the other between God and *Abraham*, and his natural Posterity also, *vers. 7, 8, 9, 10.* The former you call a Covenant of Grace, the latter a Covenant of Works. And p. 81. you affirm, That after God had entred the



P. 81.

Covenant of Grace with *Abraham*, v. 2, 4. that *Abraham* himself was required to be circumcised by the Command of God, as a Token of the Covenant of Works. And then (after some unbecoming Scoffs for misplacing *vers.* 7, 8. where *vers.* 9, 10. should be; as also of *Gen.* 12. for *Gen.* 17. (whether by the *Scribe*, my *Self*, or *Press*, I cannot say; but in each place sufficient light is given to set you right in the scope and Argument of my Discourse) you tell us, That *how harsh and unlikely soever it may seem to man's carnal reason, that the latter, to wit, the Covenant of Works made with Abraham, vers.* 9, 10. *must needs make void the Covenant of Grace made with him, vers.* 2, 4. yet the *Apostle gives a quite contrary resolution of it, Gal.* 3. 17. And after all, *p.* 79. in return to my Argument, That the Circumcision of *Abraham*, and his Seed, *vers.* 9, 10. could not possibly be a condition of *Adam's* Covenant of Works from the nature of the act: because *Paul* himself circumcised *Timothy*, *Act.* 16. 1, 2, 3. and asserts it to be a part of his Liberty, *Gal.* 2. 3, 4. which could never be, if in the very nature of the act it had bound *Timothy* to keep the Law for justification; and had been contrary to the whole scope of the *Apostle's* Doctrine:



Doctrine: but it became an obligation only from the intention of the Agent. All that you say to this, p. 95. is, "That as for *Paul's compliance with the Jews*, "however the case stood in that respect, "this is certain, That the blessed Apostle "would never have expressed himself with "that vehemency he doth, Gal. 5. 2, 3. "if this had been only the sense of the "Jewish Teachers, or that Circumcision in "its own nature did not oblige to the keeping of the whole Law; and that this is "only my corrupt gloss upon the Text.

If there be but one Covenant made *Reply.* betwixt God and *Abraham* in that 17th of *Genesis*, and you make two, not only numerically, but specifically distinct, yea, opposite Covenants of it; then you boldly cut God's Covenant with *Abraham* in two, and are guilty of an insufferable abuse of the Covenant of God. But the former is true: therefore so is the latter. You say, p. 223, 224. of your Call, "That at the *second and fourth Verses* "God made a Covenant with *Abraham* "himself alone; but at *verse 7.* he makes "the Covenant of Circumcision betwixt "himself and *Abraham*, and his natural "Seed also; and saith, *vers. 7.* And, or "(according to the old Translation)

“*Moreover*; as proceeding to speak of  
 “another Covenant than what he had  
 “been before insisting on.

Now I would soberly ask, (1.) What  
 Vouchers you have amongst Expositors  
 for this your rash and daring Assertion?  
 I find not a man that hath trod this path  
 before you, and I hope none will be  
 hardy enough to follow. You certainly  
 stand alone, and 'tis pity but you should.  
 (2.) Where do you find the just parts of  
 the New Covenant in the 2d and 4th  
*verse*? Is it not altogether promisory on  
 God's part, without any restipulation on  
 Abraham's? for you have excluded v, 1,  
 9, 10. from that which you call God's  
 Covenant of Grace with him. And then  
 for your Covenant of Works, *vers.* 7, 8,  
 9; 10. you make this to be the Promiso-  
 ry part of that Covenant, *to be a God unto*  
*thee, and to thy Seed after thee*; and again  
*vers.* 8. *I will be their God*. Was ever  
 such a Promise as this, found in a Cove-  
 nant of Works? Tell me what-ever God  
 said more in the New Covenant, than he  
 saith here? Oh blessed Covenant of  
 Works, if this be such! (3.) Tell me  
 whether you can satisfy your own Con-  
 science with the Answers you have given  
 to my first Argument against your para-  
 doxical,

doxical, yea heterodoxical Exposition? I told you, That if *vers.* 7, 8, 9, 10. contain another Covenant, *viz.* of Works, entred by God with *Abraham* and his Seed, it must needs make void the former Covenant, *vers.* 2, 4. for where-ever the Covenant of Works takes place, the Covenant of Grace gives place; they cannot consist, as I have abundantly proved before. Do you verily think those words of the Apostle, *Gal.* 3. 17. which you bring as a foundation to support your singular and sinful Exposition, *viz.* *And this I say, That the Covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the Law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul that it should make the Promise of none effect*; do you think (I say) that in that, or any other Text, the Apostle opposes the two Covenants made (as you fancy) with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17? or doth he not there speak of God's Covenant with *Abraham*, as distinguished from the Law made 430. years afterward? (4.) Have you satisfied your own Judgment and Conscience in the Reply you make to that unanswerable Objection from *Paul's* circumcising of *Timothy*, *Acts* 16. 2, 3. where you have the plain matter of fact before you, that he was

circumcised by *Paul*; and this Fact of his, justified as a part of the Liberty he had in Christ, *Gal. 2. 3, 4.* from

Teneter non simpliciter  
& absolute ex genere operis,  
sed ex intentione operantis,  
& supposita tali opinione, &c. *Poole in loc.*

whence it evidently appears, That Circumcision in its own nature did not simply and absolutely oblige men to the keeping of *Moses* his Law for Righteousness, but only from the intention or opinion of the Person. And though you call this my corrupt gloss upon the Text, therein you grossly abuse me. The gloss is neither corrupt, nor my own; but the unanimous Judgment of all sound Expositors of the Text, as you might see, were you capable of seeing it, in a Collection of their Judgments upon that Text, *Gal. 5. 2, 3.* in Mr. *Poole's Synopsis*. And tho *Estius* thinks the Act of Circumcision might be obligatory to the *Gentiles*, to whom the Law was not given; yet it was not so to the *Jews* that believed, and such was *Timothy*. But why do I refer you to the Judgment of *Commentators*? the very reason of it may convince you: For,

If the very Act of Circumcision did in its own nature oblige all on whom it passed, to keep the whole Law for their Righte-

Righteousness, then *Paul* so obliged *Timothy*, and all others on whom he passed it, to keep the Law for their Righteousness.

But *Paul* did not oblige *Timothy*, or any other on whom he passed it, by the very Act of Circumcision so to keep the Law.

Therefore the very Act of Circumcision in its own nature did not oblige all on whom it passed, to keep the whole Law for Righteousness.

You may ponder this *Argument* at your leisure, and not think to refute it at so cheap a rate, as by calling it a corrupt gloss of my own. And thus I hope I have sufficiently fortified and confirmed my Third Argument, to prove *Abraham's* Covenant to be a Covenant of Grace. My Fourth was this.

*Argument IV.*

That which in its direct and primary end teacheth Man the corruption of his Nature by sin, and the mortification of sin by the Spirit of Christ, cannot be a condition of the Covenant of Works.

But so did Circumcision in the very direct and primary end of it. Therefore,  
&c.

Your Reply to this is, "*That when I have substantially proved that the Sinai Covenant, as it contained the Passeeover, Sacrifices, Types and Appendages, under which were veiled many spiritual Mysteries relating to Christ, and mortification of sin by his Grace and Spirit, to be no Covenant of Works, but a Gospel-covenant; you will then grant with me, that the present Argument is convincing;* p. 96, 97. of your Reply.

*Reply.* Sir, I take you for an honest man: and every honest man will be as good as his word. Either I have fully proved against you, that the *Sinai* Law (taken in that latitude you here express it) is not an *Adam's* Covenant of Works, or I have not. If I have not, doubtless you have reserved your more pertinent and strong Replies in your own breast, and trust not to those weak and silly ones which you see here baffled, and have only served to involve you in greater Absurdities than before. But if you have brought forth all your strength (as in such a desperate strait no man can imagine but you would) then I have fully proved the point against you. And if I have, I expect you to be ingenuous and candid in making good your word, That  
you

you will then grant with me, that this *Argument* is convincing to the end for which it was designed. And so I hope we have fully issued the Controversy between us, relating to God's Covenant with *Abraham*. You have indeed four *Arguments*, p. 59, 60, 61, 62. of your *Reply*, to prove *Abraham's* Covenant a Covenant of Works of the same nature with *Adam's* Covenant.

(1.) Because as life was implicitly promised to *Adam* upon his obedience, and death explicitly threatned in case of his disobedience, which made that properly a Covenant of Works; so it was in the Covenant of Circumcision, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. compared with *vers.* 10, 14.

This Argument or Reason can never *Reply*, conclude: because as God never required of *Abraham*, and his Children, personal, perfect, and perpetual obedience to the whole Law for life, as he did of *Adam*; so the death, or cutting off, spoken of here, seems to be another thing from that threatned to *Adam*. Circumcision (as I told you before) was appointed to be the discriminating Sign betwixt *Abraham's* Seed, and the Heathen World: and the wilful neglect thereof is here threatned with cutting off by Civil or Ecclesi-



Ecclesiastical Excommunication from the Commonwealth, and Church of *Israel*, as *Luther*, *Calvin*, *Paræus*, *Muscus*, &c. expounds; not by death of Body and Soul, as was threatned to *Adam*, without place for repentance, or hope of mercy.

(2.) You say *Abraham's* Covenant could not be a Covenant of Faith, because Faith was not reckoned to *Abraham* for Righteousness in Circumcision, but in Uncircumcision, *Rom.* 4: 9, 10.

*Reply.*

This is weak reasoning. Circumcision could not belong to a Gospel-covenant, because *Abraham* was a Believer before he was circumcised. You may as well deny the *Lord's Supper* to be the Seal of a Gospel-Covenant, because the Partakers of it are Believers before they partake of it. Beside, you cannot deny but it sealed the Righteousness of Faith to *Abraham*: and I desired you before, to prove that a Seal of the Covenant of Works is capable of being applied to such an use and service, which you have not done, nor ever will be able to do; but politickly slid by it.

(3.) You say it cannot be a Covenant of Grace, because it is contra-distinguished to the Righteousness of Faith, *Rom.* 4.

13.

The

The Law in that place is put strictly *Reply.* for the pure Law of Nature, and *Metaleptically* signifies the Works of the Law, which is a far different thing from the Law taken in that latitude wherein you take it. And is not this a pretty Argument, that because the promise to *Abraham*, and his Seed, was not through the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith; therefore the Covenant of God made with *Abraham*, and his Seed, *Gen. 17.* cannot be a gracious, but a legal Covenant? This Promise mentioned *Rom. 4. 13.* was made to *Abraham* long before the Law was given by *Moses*: and Free-grace, not *Abraham's* legal Righteousness, was the impulsive cause moving God to make that Promise to *Abraham*, and to his Seed: and their enjoyment of the Mercies promised, was not to be through the Law, but through the Righteousness of Faith. By what rule of art this Scripture is alledged to prove God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* to be a Covenant of Works, I am utterly to seek. If it be only because *Circumcision* was added to it, that's answered over and over before; and you neither have, nor can reply to it.

(4.) Lastly,

(4.) Lastly, It cannot (say you) be a Covenant of Grace, because it's represented to us in Scripture as a Bondage-covenant, *Acts 15. 10, &c. Gal. 5. 1.*

*Reply.* 'Tis time, I see, to make an end. Your discourse runs low, and dreggy. Do you think it is one and the same thing to say, That the Ceremonial Law was a yoke of bondage to them that were under it, and to say it was an *Adam's* Covenant? Are these two parallel distinctions in your *Logick*? Alas! Sir, there is a wide difference. The difficulty, variety, and chargeableness of those Ceremonies, made them indeed burthensome and tiresome to that People; but they did not make the Covenant, to which they were annexed, to become an *Adam's* Covenant of Works: for in the very next breath, *ver/.* 11. the Apostle will tell you, *they were saved*; yea, and tells us, that *we shall be saved even as they*. So that either they that were under this yoke, were saved by Faith in the way of Free-grace, as we now are; or we must be saved in the way of legal Obedience, as they were. Take which you please, for one of them you must take. *We shall be saved, even as they*, *Acts 15. 10, 11.*

If

If you can make no stronger opposition to my *Arguments*, than such as you have here made, your Cause is lost; though your confidence and obstinacy remain. It were easy for me to fill more Paper than I have written on this Subject, with Names of principal note in the Church of God, who with one voice decry your groundless *Position*, and constantly affirm, That the Law in the complex sense you take it, as it comprehends the Ceremonial Rites and Ordinances whereunto Circumcision pertains, is, and can be no other than the Covenant of Grace, though more obscurely administered. But because *Latin* Authors are of little use to you, and among *English* ones, the Judgment of Dr. *Crisp*, I suppose, will be *instar omnium* with you: I will recite it faithfully out of his *Sermon* upon the two Covenants, where he makes the Old and New Covenant to be indeed two distinct Covenants of Grace, (for which I see no reason at all) but proves the former to be so in these words.

“It is granted of all men, That in the  
 “Covenant of Works there is no *remission*  
 “of *Sin*, there is no notice of Christ; but  
 “the whole business or imployment of  
 “the

Vol. 2.  
 Sermon. 2.  
 pag. 247,  
 248, 250.

“the Priests of the old Law, was altogether about *remission of Sins*, and the  
 “exhibiting and holding forth of Christ  
 “in their fashion unto the People. In  
 “the 15th of *Numbers*, *vers.* 28. (I will  
 “give you but one Instance) there you  
 “shall plainly see, That the administration  
 “of that Priestly Office had remission  
 “of Sins as the main end of that Administration. *If a Soul sin through ignorance, he shall bring a She-goat unto*  
 “the Priest, and he shall make an atonement  
 “for the Soul that sinneth ignorantly, and  
 “it shall be forgiven him: See, the main  
 “end is administering forgiveness of  
 “Sins.

“And that Christ was the main Subject  
 “of that their Ministry, is plain,  
 “because the Apostle saith in the Verse  
 “before my Text, That all that Administration  
 “was but a Shadow of Christ,  
 “and a Figure for the present to represent  
 “him, as he doth express in the 9th  
 “Chapter of this Epistle. And the truth  
 “is, the usual general Gospel that all the  
 “Jews had, was in their Sacrifices and  
 “Priestly Observations. —

“So that it's plain, the administration  
 “of their Covenant was an administration  
 “of Grace, and absolutely distinct  
 “from

“ from the administration of the Cove-  
 “ nant of Works. And what can be said  
 more absolutely and directly contradicto-  
 ry to your *Position*, than this is? And  
 yet again, *p.* 250. speaking to that Scrip-  
 ture, *Heb.* 8. 8. “ where the Apostle  
 “ distinguishes of a *better* and a *faulty*,  
 “ of *First* and *Second*; he saith, *Finding*  
 “ *fault with them*, *The days come, when*  
 “ *I will make a new Covenant with the*  
 “ *House of Israel, and with the House of*  
 “ *Judah, not according to the Covenant I*  
 “ *made with their Fathers, when I took*  
 “ *them by the hand to lead them out of the*  
 “ *Land of Egypt*; and (as *Jeremiah* adds  
 “ it, for the Apostle takes all this out of  
 “ *Jer.* 31. 31.) *although I was an Husband*  
 “ *to them*; and in the close of all, *Your*  
 “ *Sins and Iniquities will I remember no*  
 “ *more.* — Here are two Covenants, a  
 “ *new Covenant*, and the *Covenant he*  
 “ *made with their Fathers*. Some may  
 “ think it was the Covenant of works  
 “ at the promulgation of the Moral  
 “ Law; but mark well that Expression  
 “ of *Jeremiah*, and you shall see it was  
 “ the Covenant of Grace. *For* (saith he)  
 “ *not according to the Covenant I made with*  
 “ *their Fathers, although I was an Husband*  
 “ *unto them.* How can God be considered

“ as Husband to a People under the Cove-  
 “ nant of Works, which was broken by man  
 “ in innocency, and so became disannulled  
 “ or impossible by the breach of it ? The Co-  
 “ venant of Works runs thus : Cursed is  
 “ every one that continueth not in all things  
 “ that are written in the Book of the Law ;  
 “ and, In the day thou sinnest, thou shalt die  
 “ the death. Man had sinned before God  
 “ took him by the hand to lead him out of the  
 “ Land of Egypt, and Sin had separated  
 “ Man from God : how then can God be  
 “ called an Husband in the Covenant of  
 “ Works ? The Covenant therefore was not  
 “ a Covenant of Works, but such a Cove-  
 “ nant as the Lord became an Husband in,  
 “ and that must be a Covenant of Grace,  
 &c.

How the Doctor makes good his two  
 distinct Covenants of Grace, I see not,  
 nor expect ever to see proved, and is not  
 my present concernment to enquire ; but  
 once it is evident by what he hath here  
 said, That the Ceremonial Law, where-  
 of Circumcision is a branch, can be no  
 other than the Covenant of Grace. And  
 nothing is more common among our Di-  
 vines, than to prove not only the Sinai  
 Law, but God's Covenant with *Abra-*  
*ham*, Gen. 17. to be the Covenant of  
 Grace,

Grace by this Medium, That God having entred into a Covenant of Grace with Abraham before, would never bring him under a Covenant of Works afterwards, which must nullify and void the former. And beside, such a Covenant of Works as you make this, was never heard of in the World, wherein God promises to be a God to Abraham, and his Seed, in their Generations, upon the rigorous and impossible Terms of Adam's Covenant.

By this time, I presume, you must feel the force of those Arguments produced against your vain and groundless notion; and how little you are able to do to deliver your *Thesis* from them, but the more you struggle, the more still you are intangled. Go which way you will, your Absurdities follow you as your Shadow. — *heret lateri lethalis arundo*. Leaving therefore all your Absurdities upon you, till God shall give you more illumination and ingenuity to discern and acknowledge them; I shall pass on to the examination of your *third Position*, which led you into these other gross Mistakes; and if God shall convince you of your Error in this point, I hope it may prove a means of recovering you out of the rest:

Q

which



which in love to your Soul, I heartily desire.

III. Your third *Position* is, *That God's Covenant with Abraham, Gen. 17. can be no other than the Covenant of Works, because Circumcision was the Condition of it : For (say you) the new Covenant is altogether absolute, and unconditional.*

### *Of the Conditionality of the New Covenant.*

This Question, Whether the Covenant of Grace be conditionate or absolute, was moved (as a learned Man observes) in the former Age, by occasion of the Controversy about Justification, betwixt the *Protestants* and *Papists*. Among the *Protestants*, some denied, and others affirmed the Conditionality of the Gospel-covenant. Those that denied it, did so for fear of mingling Law and Gospel, Christ's Righteousness and Man's, as the *Papists* had wickedly done before. Those that affirmed it, did so out of fear also ; lest the necessity of Faith and Holiness being relaxed, *Libertinism* should be that way introduced. But if the Question were duly stated, and the sense of its

Terms

Terms agreed upon, the Gospel-Covenant may be affirmed to be conditional, to secure the People of God from *Libertinism*, without the least diminution of the Righteousness of Christ, or clouding the Free-grace of God.

I did in my first Answer to your *Call*, endeavour to prevent the needless trouble you have here given your self, by a succinct state of the Question: telling you the Controversy betwixt us, is not, (1.) Whether the Gospel-covenant requires no duties at all of them that are under it? nor (2.) Whether it requires any such Conditions as were in *Adam's* Covenant, namely, perfect, personal, and perpetual Obedience under the penalty of the Curse, and admitting no place of Repentance? nor (3.) Whether any Condition required by it on our part, have any thing in its own nature meritorious of the Benefits promised? nor (4.) Whether we be able in our own strength, and by the power of our Free-will, without the *preventing*, as well as the *assisting* Grace of God, to perform any such work or duty as we call a Condition? These things I told you were to be excluded out of this Controversy. But the only Question betwixt us, is,

Q 2

Whether

*Quest.* Whether in the New Covenant, some act of ours (though it have no merit in it, nor can be done in our own single strength) be not required to be performed by us antecedently to a blessing or privilege consequent by virtue of a promise? And whether such an act or duty, being of a suspending nature to the blessing promised, it have not the true and proper nature of a Gospel-condition?

In your *Reply* (contrary to all rule and reason) you include and chiefly argue against the very Particulars by me there excluded; and scarcely (if at all) touch the true Question, as it was stated, and by you ought accordingly to have been considered. I might therefore justly think my self discharged from any further concernment with you about it: for if you will include what I plainly excluded, you argue not against mine, but another man's *Position*, which I am not concerned to defend. You here dispute against meritorious Conditions, which I explode and abhor as much as your self. You say, p. 34. of your *Reply*, that a Condition plainly implies something of merit, by way of *condignity* or *congruity*; which is false, and turns the Question from me to the *Papists*. And were it not more for the clearing up of so great a

Point

Point for the instruction and satisfaction of others, than any hope you give me of convincing you, I should not have touch'd this Question again, unless I had found your Replies more distinct and pertinent. But finding the Point in controversy of great weight, I will once more tell you,

1. What the word [*Condition*] signifies.
2. In what sense it is by us used in this Controversy.
3. Establish my *Arguments* for the conditionality of the New Covenant.

(1.) And first we grant, That neither our word [*Condition*] nor your term [*Absolute*] are either of them found in Scripture, with respect to God's covenanting with Man ; so that we contend not about the signification of a Scripture term. But though the word *Conditional* be not there, yet the thing being found there, That brings the word *Conditional* into use in this Controversy. For we know not how to express those sacred *Particles*, εἰ, ὅτι εἰ, εἰ μὴ, μόνον, εἰ ὅτι, &c. If, If not, Unless, But if, Except, Only, and the like, which are frequently used to limit and restrain the

Grants and Privileges of the New Covenant, *Rom.* 10. 9. *Matt.* 18. 3. *Mark* 5. 36. *Mark* 11. 26. *Rom.* 4. 24. I say, we know not how to express the true sense and force of these *Particles* in this Controversy, by any other word so fit and full as the word *Conditional* is. Now this word *Condition* being a Law-term, is variously used among *Jurists*; and the various use of the word, occasions that confusion which is found in this Controversy. He therefore that shall clearly distinguish the various senses and uses of the word, is most likely to labour with success in this Controversy. I shall therefore briefly note the principal senses and uses of the term, and shew in what sense we here take it. Of *Conditions* there be two sorts.

1. Antecedent
  2. Consequent
- } Conditions.

As to the latter, namely, *consequent Conditions*, you your self acknowledge, *p.* 100. "That in the outward dispensation of the Covenant, many things  
 "are required of us in order unto the  
 "participation or enjoyment of the  
 "full end of the Covenant in glory.  
 So

So then the Covenant is acknowledged to be consequently conditional, which is no more than to say with the Apostle, *Without holiness no man shall see God*; or, *that if any man draw back, his soul shall have no pleasure in him*, &c. Our Controversy therefore is not about *consequent Conditions*, laid by God upon Believers, after they are in Christ and the Covenant; the Covenant so considered, à *posteriori*, will not be denied to be Conditional. The only Question is about *Antecedent Conditions*; and of these we are here to consider,

1. Such as respect the first Sanction of the Covenant in Christ.
2. Such as respect the application of the benefits of the Covenant unto Men \*.

\* Si fœdus spectetur

ratione sanctionis primæ in Christo, nullam habet conditionem præviā; sed solâ gratiâ Dei, & Christi merito niritur. Sed si attendatur ratione acceptationis & applicationis in fideli, conditionem habet *Fidem*, quæ hominem unit Christo, & sic in communionem fœderis mittit. *Turret. vol. 2. p. 203.*

As to the first Sanction of the Covenant in Christ, we freely acknowledge it hath no previous Condition on Man's part; but depends purely and only upon the Grace of God, and Merit of Christ. So that our Question proceeds about such

*antecedent Conditions* only as respect the Application of the Benefits of the Covenant unto Men. And of these *Antecedent Conditions* there are likewise two sorts, which must be carefully distinguished.

1. Such Antecedent Conditions which have the force of a meritorious and impulsive Cause, which being performed by the proper strength of Nature, or at most by the help of common assisting Grace, do give a Man a right to the reward or blessings of the Covenant. And in this sense we utterly disclaim antecedent Conditions, as I plainly told you, p. 61. of my *Vindictia*, &c. Or,
2. An Antecedent Condition signifying no more than an Act of ours, which though it be neither perfect in every degree, nor in the least meritorious of the benefit conferred; nor performed in our own natural strength; yet according to the constitution of the Covenant, is required of us in order to the blessings consequent thereupon by vertue of the Promise: and consequently

quently the benefits and mercies granted in the Promise in this order are, and must be suspended by the Donor or Disposer of them, until it be performed. Such a Condition we affirm *Faith* to be. But here again, *Faith* ~~is self, it is~~ (in this sense) the Condition of the New Covenant, is considered,

{ 1. Essentially.

Or,

{ 2. Organically and Instrumentally.

In the first consideration of *Faith*, according to its Essence, it is contained under *Obedience*, and in that respect we exclude it from justifying our persons, or entitling us to the saving-mercies of the New Covenant, as it is a work of ours; and so I excluded it, p. 133. of my *Method of Grace*, which you ignorantly or wilfully mistake, when in your *Reply*, p. 88, 89. you object it against me. *Faith* considered in this sense, is not the Condition of the Covenant, nor can pretend to be so, more than any other Grace. But

We consider it *Organically*, Relatively, and (as most speak) *Instrumentally*, as it receives Christ, *Joh. 1. 12.* and so gives



gives us power to become the Sons of God; it being impossible for any Man to partake of the saving benefits of the Covenant, but as he is united to Christ. *For all the Promises of God in him are yea; and in him, Amen,* 2 Cor. 1. 20. And united to Christ no Man can be, before he be a believer; for Christ dwelleth in our hearts by Faith, *Eph. 3. 17.* Upon which Scriptural Grounds and Reasons it is, that we affirm Faith to be an Antecedent Condition, or, *Causa sine qua non*, to the saving benefits of the new Covenant; and that it must go before them, at least in order of nature, which is that we mean, when we say Faith is the antecedent Condition of the New Covenant. And those that deny it to be so, as the *Antinomians* do, who talk of actual and personal Justification from Eternity, or at least from the death of Christ, must consequently assert the actual Justification of *Infidels*; and not only disturb, but destroy the whole order of the Gospel, and open the Sluces and Flood-gates to all manner of licentiousness.

Moses's  
Self-denial.  
p. 188.

And thus our Pious and Learned Divines generally affirm Faith to be the condition of the Covenant. So Mr. *Jeremiah*

*miah Burroughs*, "Faith (saith he) hath  
 "the great honour above all other Graces,  
 "to be the *Condition* of the second Cove-  
 "nant ; therefore certainly it is some  
 "great matter that Faith enables us to  
 "do. Whatsoever keeps Covenant with  
 "God , brings strength, though it self  
 "be never so weak ; as *Sampson's Hair*.  
 "What is weaker than a little Hair ? Yet  
 "because the keeping that, was keeping  
 "Covenant with God ; therefore even a  
 "little Hair was so great strength to  
 "*Sampson*. Faith then, that is the Con-  
 "dition of the Covenant, in which all  
 "Grace and Mercy is contained, if it  
 "be kept, it will cause strength indeed  
 "to do great things.

And as this excellent Man, *Mr. Bur-*  
*roughs*, is in this sense for the Condition-  
 ality of the New Covenant ; so are the  
 most Learned and Eminent of our own  
 Divines. *Dr. Edward Reynold's* assigning  
 the differences betwixt the two Cove-  
 nants, gives this for one : "They differ  
 "in the Condition (saith he) ; there Le-  
 "gal Obedience, here only Faith ; and the  
 "certain consequent thereof, Repen-  
 "tance. There is difference likewise in  
 "the manner of performing these Con-  
 "ditions ; For now God himself begins  
 "first

*Dr. Rey-  
 nold's his  
 Life of  
 Christ. p.  
 512.*

“ first to work upon us, and in us, before we move or stir towards him. He doth not only command us, and leave us to our created strength to obey the Command; but he furnisheth us with his own Grace and Spirit to obey the Command.

Dr. Owen  
*Treatise of*  
*Redemption.* Book 3.  
chap. 1. p.  
103, 104.  
And in his  
*Tract of Ju-*  
*stification,*  
p. 299, &c.

Of the same judgment is Dr. Owen.  
“ Are we able (saith he) of our selves to fulfil the Condition of the New Covenant? Is it not as easie for a Man by his own strength to fulfil the whole Law, as to repent, and believe the Promise of the Gospel? This then is one main difference of these two Covenants, That the Lord did in the Old only require the Condition; now in the New, he also effects it in all the foederates to whom the Covenant is extended. This is the Man you pretend to be against Conditions.

Mr. William Pemble opening the nature of the two Covenants, saith, “ The Law offers Life unto Man upon condition of perfect Obedience; the Gospel offers Life unto Man upon another condition, to wit, of Repentance, and Faith in Christ. And after his proofs for it, saith, “ From whence we conclude firmly, That the difference  
“ be-

Pemble, of  
*Justif. Sect.*  
4. Chap. 1.  
p. 214,  
215, 216,  
217.

“between the Law and the Gospel, as-  
 “signed by our Divines, is most certain  
 “and agreeable to the Scriptures, viz.  
 “That the Law gives Life unto the just,  
 “upon condition of perfect obedience in  
 “all things; the Gospel gives Life unto  
 “sinners, upon condition they repent and  
 “believe in Christ Jesus.

Learned and judicious Mr. *William Perkins*,  
*Perkins* thus; “The Covenant of Grace Order of Causes, Chap. 31. p. 17.  
 “is that whereby God freely promising  
 “Christ and his Benefits, exacts again of  
 “Man, that he would by Faith receive  
 “Christ. And again, in the Covenant  
 “of Grace two things must be consider-  
 “ed, the *Substance* thereof, and the *Con-*  
 “*dition*. The *Substance* of the Covenant Reformed Catholick, of Justif. p. 570.  
 “is, That Righteousness and Life Ever-  
 “lasting, is given to God’s Church and  
 “People by Christ. The *Condition* is,  
 “That we for our parts are by Faith to  
 “receive the foresaid Benefits; and this  
 “*Condition* is by Grace, as well as the  
 “*Substance*.

That Learned, Humble, and Painful  
 Minister of Christ Mr. *John Ball*, stating Mr. J. Ball of the Co-  
 venant of Grace,  
 Chap. 1. Of the New  
 Covenant, p. 198.  
 the difference betwixt the two Cove-  
 nants, shews, that in the Covenant at  
*Sinai*, in the Covenant with *Abraham*,  
 and that with *David*, that in all these  
 Covenant-

Covenant expreffures, there are for fubftance the fame Evangelical conditions of Faith and Sincerity.

Davenant  
De Justif.  
Aft. cap.  
30.

Dr. *Davenant* thus: "In the Covenant of the Gospel it is otherwise; for in this Covenant, to the obtainment of Reconciliation, Justification, and Life Eternal, there is no other condition required than of true and lively Faith, *John 3. 16.* Therefore Justification, and the right to Eternal Life, doth depend on the Condition of Faith alone.

Dr. *Downname* harmonizeth with the rest in these words: "That which is the only Condition of the Covenant of Grace, by that alone we are justified: But Faith is the Condition of the Covenant of Grace, which is therefore called *Lex Fidei*. Our Writers (saith he) distinguishing the two Covenants of God, that is, the Law and the Gospel, whereof one is the Covenant of Works, the other the Covenant of Grace, do teach, That the Law of Works is that which to Justification requireth works as the Condition thereof: The Law of Faith that, which to Justification requireth Faith as the Condition thereof. The former saith, *Do this, and thou shalt live*; the latter, *Believe in Christ, and thou shalt be saved.* But

Tract. 1. Of  
Justif. Lib.  
6. cap. 8.  
Sect. 10.  
and Lib. 7.  
cap. 2.  
Sect. 6.

But what stand I upon particular, though renowned names? You may see a whole Constellation of our sound and famous Divines in the Assembly, thus expressing themselves about this Point.

“The Grace of God (say they) is manifested in the second Covenant, in that he freely provideth, and offereth to sinners a Mediator, and Life and Salvation by him, and requiring Faith as the Condition to interest them in him, promiseth and giveth his Holy Spirit to all his Elect, to work in them that Faith, with all other saving Graces, and to enable them to all holy Obedience, as the evidence of the truth of their Faith, &c.

*Larger Catech. 4<sup>to</sup>.  
London  
1648. p. 8.*

I could even tire the Reader with the Testimonies of eminent foreign Divines, as *Cameron de triplici fœdere, Thes. 82. Ursinus & Pareus explicatio Catech. Quest 18. de fœdere. Wendeline, Christian Theology, Lib. 1. cap. 19. Thes. 9. Poliander, Rivet, Wallaus, and Thyssius*, the four learned Professors at *Leyden, Synops. Diss. 23. Sect. 27, &c.* And as for those Ancient and Modern Divines, whom the *Antinomians* have corrupted and misrepresented, the Reader may see them all vindicated, and

and their concurrence with those I have named, evidenced by that Learned and Pious Mr. *John Graile*, in his *Modest Vindication of the Doctrine of Conditions in the Covenant of Grace*, from p. 58. onward; a Man whose name and memory is precious with me, not only upon the account of that excellent Sermon he Preached, and those fervent Prayers he poured out many years since at my Ordination; but for that Learned and Judicious *Treatise* of his against Mr. *Eyre*, wherein he hath cast great light upon this Controversy, as excellent Mr. *Baxter*, and Mr. *Woodbridge* have also done. But alas, what evidence is sufficient to satisfy ignorant and obstinate Men!

Sir, it pities me to see the lamentable confusion you are in. You are forced by the evidence of truth to yield and own the substance of what I contend for. You have yielded the Covenant to be consequently Conditional in p. 84. of your *Reply*. You have also as plainly yielded, that *the Application of Pardoning Mercy unto our Souls, is in order of nature consequent unto believing*; p. 31. of your *Reply*. From both which concessions in your own words recited, this Conclusion is evident and unavoidable, *viz.*

That

That no adult person, notwithstanding God's Eternal Election, and Christ's meritorious death and satisfaction, according to the Constitution and Order of the New Covenant, can either be justified in this World, or saved in the World to come, unless he first believe.

For if the Application of Pardoning Mercy unto our Souls, is in order of Nature consequent unto believing (as you truly affirm it to be) then according to the Constitution and Order of the New Covenant, no application of pardoning Mercy can be made to our Souls before we believe. And if it be evident (as you say it is, p. 84.) *that unto a full and compleat enjoyment of all the Promises of the Covenant, Faith on our part is required;* then as no Man can be actually justified in this World, so neither can he be saved before, or without Faith in the World to come. And if you did but see the true suspending nature of Faith, which you plainly yield in these two concessions; you would quickly grant the conditional nature of it: For what is the proper nature and true notion of a Condition, but to suspend the benefits and grants of that Covenant in which it is so inserted? And thus the Controversy betwixt us is fairly  
R issued.



issued. But I doubt you understand not what you have here written, or are troubled with a very bad memory : Because I find you in a far different note from this in p. 103. of your Reply, where you say, " That if Jesus Christ fulfilled  
 " the Law, and purchased Heaven and  
 " Happiness for Men ( as all true Prote-  
 " stants hitherto have taught ) then no-  
 " thing can remain, but to declare this to  
 " them, to incline them to believe and  
 " accept it ; and to prescribe in what way,  
 " and by what means they shall finally come  
 " to inherit Eternal Life. To affirm there-  
 " fore, that Faith and Repentance are the  
 " Conditions of the New Covenant required  
 " of us in point of Duty, antecedent to the  
 " benefit of the Promise, doth necessarily  
 " suppose, that Christ hath not done all for  
 " us, nor purchased a right to Life for  
 " any ; but only made way that they may  
 " have it upon certain terms, or ( as some  
 " say ) he hath merited that we might me-  
 " rit : But the Conditions of the Covenant  
 " are not to be performed by the Head and  
 " Members both, Gal. 4. 4. Christ there-  
 " fore having in our stead performed the  
 " Conditions of Life, there remains no-  
 " thing but a Promise, and the Obedience  
 " of Children, as the fruit and effect there-  
 " of

*"of to them that believe in him, together  
"with means of obtaining the full possession,  
"which here we want.*

Either these passages I have here cited *Reply:* and compared, were fetched at a great distance of time, out of Authors differing as much in judgment as you and I do; and so the dissonancy of them is the meer effect of oblivion, and incogitancy: Or else your Intellectuals are more confused and weak than I am willing to suspect them to be. For if the application of Pardoning Mercy to our Souls; is in order of Nature consequent to Believing (as you truly say it was); then certainly, notwithstanding Christ's fulfilling the Law, and purchasing Heaven and Happiness for Men, something else must remain to be done, besides declaring this to them, to incline them to believe and accept it, or prescribing to them in what way they shall finally come to inherit Eternal Life. For besides those declarations and prescriptions you talk of, Faith it self must be wrought in the Souls of Men, or else Pardoning Mercy is not in order of Nature consequent unto believing, as you said it was: For all the external Declarations and Prescriptions in the World are not Faith it self,

but only the means to beget it ; which may, or may not, become effectual to that end.

*Secondly*, Whereas you say, that this (senseless notion) is consequent upon the Doctrine of all true *Protestants*, you therein grossly abuse them, and make all the true Protestants in the World guilty of worse than *Arminian* or *Antinomian* dotage. The *Antinomian*, indeed, makes our actual justification to be nothing else but the manifestation or declaration of our Justification from Eternity, or the time of Christ's death. And the *Arminian* tells us, That the Declaration of the Gospel to Men, is sufficient to bring them to Faith by the assisting Grace of the Spirit.. But your notion is worse than the very dregs of both, and yet you tack it as a just consequent to the Doctrine of all true *Protestants*.

*Reply.* *Thirdly*, You say, That to affirm Faith  
 P. 104. and Repentance to be the Conditions of the New Covenant required of us in point of Duty, antecedent to the benefit of the Promise, doth necessarily suppose that Christ hath not done all for us, nor purchased a right to Life for any ; but only made way that they may have it upon certain terms, or merited that we might merit. Here,  
 Sir,

Sir, you vilely abuse all those worthy Divines before mentioned, who have made Faith the Condition of the New Covenant, pinning upon them both *Popery* and *Judaism*. *Popery*, yea, the dregs of *Popery*, in supposing their Doctrine necessarily implies that *Christ hath merited that we might merit*. And *Judaism* to the height, in saying, *their Doctrine necessarily supposes that Christ hath not purchased a right of Life to any*. What can a Jew say more? Ah, Mr. C. can you read the words I have recited out of blessed *Burroughs, Owen, Pemble, Perkins, Davenant, Downname*, yea, the whole Assembly of Reverend and Holy Divines, with multitudes more (who have all with one mouth asserted Faith to be the Condition of the New Covenant required on Man's part, in point of Duty; and that Men must believe before they can be justified; which is the very same thing with what I say, That it is antecedent to the benefit of the Promise) and not tremble to think of the direful charges you here draw against them? The Lord forgive your rash presumption.

Saltmarsh  
of Free-  
grace.  
p. 126,  
127.

*Fourthly*, Whereas you say, Christ hath in our stead performed the Conditions of life, and that there remains nothing but a Promise, &c. you therein speak at the highest dialect of *Antinomianism*; Hath not Christ by his Life and Death performed the Conditions of Life in our stead? yet you your self confess, that pardoning Mercy is in order of nature consequent to our believing; certainly then there is something more to be done beside the mere making, or being of a Promise: there must be the effect of the Promise in our hearts; yea, the effects of those absolute Promises of the first Grace, *Ezek. 36. Jer. 32.* Or else notwithstanding Christ's performance of Redemption on his part, we can neither be justified nor saved. For I don't think you intend to lay the Conditions of Repentance or believing upon Christ, who in the New Covenant hath laid them upon us, tho in the same Covenant he graciously undertakes to work them in us: and yet your words sound in that wild *Antinomian* Note.

Objection. But, I suppose, you take my Notion to be as self-repugnant as your own, when I say Faith is an antecedent Condition to Justification: because I also say,  
this

this Grace is also supernaturally wrought in us, and is not of our selves. This staggers you, and is the very stone you stumble at all along this Controversie : for in your sense, *p.* 34. every Condition is meritorious by condignity or congruity.

First, What do I say more in all this, *Reply.* than what those Worthies before-mentioned do expressly affirm? Doth not *Dr. Owen* (the man whom you deservedly value) make Conditions both in *Adam's* Covenant and the New, with this difference, that *Adam's* Covenant required them, but the New Covenant effects them in all the Fœderates? Sir, We take it for no contradiction to assert, That the planting of the Principle, and the assisting and exciting of the Acts of Faith, are the proper Works of the Spirit of God, and are also contained in the absolute Promises of the New Covenant, *Ezek.* 36. 26, 27. *Jer.* 32. 39, 40. And yet Faith, notwithstanding this, is truly and properly our work and duty; and that upon our believing, or not believing, we have, or have not, an actual interest in Christ, Righteousness, and Life. For though the Author of Faith be the Spirit of God, yet believing is properly our Act, and an Act required of us by a

R 4

plain

plain Command, 1 John 3. 23. *This is the Command of God, That ye believe.* And if its being wrought in God's strength makes it cease to be our Work, I would fain know what Exposition you would give of that place, Phil. 2. 12, 13. *Work out your own Salvation, &c. for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.* And as this Faith is truly and properly our work, though wrought in God's strength (for it is not God, but we, that do believe) so it is wrought in us by him (by your own confession) before the application of pardoning Mercy, which is consequent in order of nature thereunto: and therefore hath the true nature of an antecedent Condition, which is that I contend for; and did you but understand your own words, you would not contend against.

Object. 2. Oh, but say you, p. 34. every Condition is meritorious, either by way of *congruity* or *condignity*.

Reply. This is your ignorance of the nature of a Condition, with which I find you as unacquainted as with the nature of a Covenant. A Condition, whilst unperformed, only suspends the act of the Law or Testament: it being the Will of the Testator, Legislator, or Donor, that  
his

his Law or Testament should act or effect, when the Condition is performed, and not before : but it is not essential to a Condition, to be a meritorious or impulsive cause moving him to bestow the benefit for the sake thereof. A man freely gives another out of his love and bounty such an Estate or Sum of Money, which he shall enjoy if he live to such a year, or day ; and not before : is this *quando dies veniet*, this appointed time the meritorious or impulsive cause of the gift ? surely no man will say it : but that it is a *causa sine qua non*, or a Condition suspending the enjoyment of the gift, no man will deny that knows what the nature of a Condition is. An act meritorious by way of *Congruity*, is that to which a reward is not due out of strict justice, but out of decency, or some kind of meetness. Merit of *condignity* is a voluntary action, for which a reward is due to a man out of justice, and cannot be denied him without injustice. Our Faith is truly the Condition of the New Covenant, and yet we detest the meritoriousness of it in either sense.

But you object my words to me in my Object. 3. *Method of Grace*, where I assert the impossibility of believing without the efficacy



ficacy of supernatural Grace, p. 102, 103.

*Reply.* Sir, I own the words you quote, and am bold to challenge the most envious Eye that shall read those lines, to shew me the least repugnancy betwixt what I said there, and what I have said in my *Vindiciæ Legis*, &c. p. 9. of the *Prolegomena*, and p. 61. of that Book. You shew your good-will to make an advantageous thrust; but your Weapon is too short, and can draw no blood. But leaving these weak and impertinent Cavils, let us come to your Solution of my *Arguments*, p. 98. by which I proved the Conditionality of the New Covenant. My first *Argument* was this.

*Argument* 1.

If we cannot be justified or saved till we believe, and are justified when we believe; Then Faith is the Condition on which those consequent Benefits are suspended, &c.

*Answer.*

The sum of your Answer (without denying, distinguishing, or limiting one Proposition) is this, That, 'here Faith 'is properly put into the room of perfect 'Obedience, and is to do what perfect 'Obedience was to do under the Law: 'whereas (say you) Faith is only appointed as an Instrument to receive and 'apply

‘apply the Righteousness of Christ,  
 ‘which is the alone matter of our Justi-  
 ‘fication before God; and Faith it self is  
 ‘not our Righteousness, as it would be  
 ‘if it were a Condition, p. 105, 106.

Not to note the weakness and imper- *Reply.*  
 tinence of this Answer, I shall only take  
 notice of what you here allow, and  
 grant, That *Faith is appointed as an In-*  
*strument to receive and apply the Righte-*  
*ousness of Christ, which is the alone matter*  
*of our Justification before God.* Whence I  
 infer three Conclusions.

*First*, That we cannot be justified be-  
 fore God till we believe, except you can  
 prove, that the unaccepted and unapplied  
 Righteousness of Christ doth actually ju-  
 stify our persons before God.

*Secondly*, That the justification of our  
 persons before God, is, and must be su-  
 spended (as by a non-performed Condi-  
 tion) untill we actually believe. Which  
 two Conclusions yield up your Cause to  
 my Argument, which you here seem to  
 oppose.

*Thirdly*, That hereby you perfectly  
 renounce and destroy your *Antinomian*  
*Fancy* before-mentioned, That *if Christ*  
*have fulfilled the Law, and purchased*  
*Heaven for men, nothing can remain but*

to declare this to them, &c. for it seems by this, they must receive and apply Christ's Righteousness by Faith, or they cannot be justified (you say not *declaratively* in their own Consciences, but) *before God*. And thus instead of answering, you have confirmed and yielded my first *Argument*, and only oppose your own Mistakes, not the sense or force of my *Arguments*, in all that you say to it, or the Scriptures produced to prove it.

Argu-  
ment 2.

To my second *Argument*, recited p. 94. where I argued from God's Covenant with *Abraham*, and proved it to be conditional; and yet by you acknowledged to be a pure Gospel-covenant: all that you say, is, That you have dispatched that before, in your Discourse about the Covenant of Circumcision, and therefore will say nothing to it here.

*Reply.*

In saying nothing to it here, you have said as much as you did before in the place you refer to: and therefore finding nothing said here or there, I conclude you can say nothing to it at all.

Argu-  
ment 3.

My third *Argument* was this. If all the Promises of the Gospel be absolute and unconditional, then they do not properly belong to the New Covenant. That cannot properly and strictly be a Covenant

nant which is not a mutual Compact, and in which there is no restipulation, nor reobligation: 'tis a naked Promise, not a Covenant.

To this you answer three things. In <sup>Answer.</sup> the first branch of your Answer you im- <sup>p. 113,</sup> pudently beg the Question, by saying, <sup>114.</sup> That *'you have proved already in your Replies to my former Arguments, that the New Covenant is wholly free and absolute.* Upon this absurd *Petitio Principii* you make bold to invert my Argument thus in your second Reply. *If all the Promises of the Gospel be wholly absolute and unconditional, they do properly and truly belong to the New Covenant: But so they are. Therefore, &c.* Oh rare Disputant! In the last place, in opposition to the Sequel of my Major Proposition, you tell me you will oppose the Judgment of Dr. Owen on Heb. 8. 10. where he saith, That a Covenant properly is a Compact or Agreement on certain terms stipulated by two or more Parties, &c. and that the word Διαθήκη there used, it signifies a Covenant improperly, &c.

If you call this an opposition to the Sequel of my Major, either your Brains or mine do want *Hellebore*. Doth he not <sup>Reply.</sup> say

say the very same thing I do, that there must be a restipulation in a proper Covenant? And as for the word *Διαθήκη*, which (he saith) signifieth a Covenant improperly, but properly is a *Testamentary Disposition*, I fully concur with him therein. But I hope a *Testamentary Disposition* may have a Condition in it; to be sure such a one as I assert Faith here to be, which is the free gift of God; and in this sense I shewed you before where the *Doitor* yields Faith to be the Condition of the New Covenant.

Argu-  
ment 4.

My fourth *Argument* was this. If all the Promises of the New Covenant be absolute and unconditional, and have no respect nor relation to any grace wrought in us, or duty done by us; then the trial of our Interest in Christ by marks and signs of Grace is not our duty, nor can we take comfort in Sanctification as it is an evidence of our Justification, &c.

Answer.  
p. 120.

Your Answer is, That "at this rate  
"I may prove *quidlibet à quolibet*: for it  
"doth not follow, that, because the  
"New Covenant is absolute, therefore  
"it hath no respect nor relation to any  
"Grace wrought in us, nor Duty done  
"by us, or that we may not justly take  
"comfort in Sanctification as an evidence  
"of our Justification. If

If I had a mind to learn the art of pro-  
ving *quidlibet à quolibet*, and make my  
self ridiculous to others by such foolish  
attempts, I know no Book in the World  
fitter to instruct me therein, than yours.  
Certainly you have the knack of it, and  
gave us an instance of it but now, in con-  
futing the Sequel of my *Major* by an Al-  
legation out of Dr. *Owen*, which expressely  
confirms and establishe it. But to the  
Point, I would willingly know how it is  
possible for Sanctification to be a true and  
certain mark and sign of Justification,  
when (according to the *Antinomian*  
Principle, which you here too much  
comprobate and espouse) a man may be  
justified before he believe, yea, before  
he is a man, even from the time of  
Christ's death, and (as others of them  
speak) from eternity. A true mark and  
sign must be proper to, and inseparable  
from that which it signifies. Now if  
that be true which you said before, That  
*after Christ's fulfilling of the Law in his  
own person, &c. nothing can remain but to  
declare this to men to incline them to believe  
and accept it, and to prescribe in what way  
they shall come to inherit eternal life.* If  
this be all that can remain to us, then no-  
thing but the Declarations and Prescrip-  
tions

tions of the Gospel, which are things without us, can remain to be marks and signs of Justification to us: and consequently all those to whom those Declarations and Prescriptions are made and given, have therein the marks and evidences of their Justification. But I am truly weary of such stuff. I am sure the Apostle places *Vocation* before *Justification*, Rom. 8. 30. *Whom he called, them he justified.* And without an immediate Testimony from Heaven, I know not how to evidence and prove my Justification, but from, and by my Faith, and other parts of Sanctification; whereby I apprehended and applied the Righteousness of Christ: if you can prove it from the Declarations and Prescriptions of the Gospel, I cannot.

Argu-  
ment 5.

My fifth and last *Argument* ran thus. If the Covenant of Grace be altogether absolute and unconditional, requiring nothing to be done on our part, to entitle us to its benefits; then it cannot be man's duty in entering Covenant with God, to deliberate the terms, count the cost, or give his consent by word, or writing, to the terms of this Covenant: for where there are no terms at all (as in absolute Promises there are none) there can be  
none

none to deliberate. But I shewed you, this is man's duty, from clear and undeniable Scriptures, &c.

You say by way of answer hereunto, Answer.  
P. 122,  
123. that, "You must tell me, that the Scriptures do make a plain distinction betwixt the New and Everlasting Covenant which God hath been pleased to make with Sinners in Jesus Christ; and the return of that sincere and dutiful obedience which he requires of us, by way of answer thereunto. (2.) You say, there are many things, which tho' promised in the Covenant, and wrought in us by the Grace of God; are yet duties indispensably required of us in order to the participation of the full end of the Covenant in glory: and in respect hereof, we are indeed to deliberate the terms, count the cost, and give up our selves solemnly to him with sincere resolutions, &c. But then you thought I had understood there had been a vast difference betwixt God's Covenant with us, and our Covenant with God, citing *Ezek. 16. 59, 60, 61.* where God promiseth to give *them their Sisters for Daughters, but not by their Covenant.* And with this you compare *Psal. 89. My Covenant*  
S "will



“ *will I not break* ; where (you say) we  
 “ find a plain distinction betwixt God’s  
 “ Covenant with them, and their duty  
 “ to God. And lastly, you say, *p.* 105.  
 “ that the want of a due observation of  
 “ this plain Scripture-distinction, be-  
 “ twixt God’s free and absolute Cove-  
 “ nant made with Sinners in Christ, and  
 “ our Covenants with God by way of  
 “ return thereunto ; is the true reason of  
 “ all our mistakes about the true nature  
 “ of the Gospel-Covenant , whilst we  
 “ jumble and confound together that  
 “ which the Scriptures do so plainly di-  
 “ stinguish.

*Reply.*

To your first Answer, I say : It is  
 true, the Scriptures do distinguish be-  
 twixt Covenant, and Covenant ; that  
 of Works, and that of Grace. It also  
 distinguishes the same Covenant of  
 Grace for substance, according to its va-  
 rious administrations, into the Old, and  
 New Covenant. It also distinguishes  
 betwixt the *promissory* part of the same  
 Covenant of Grace, and the *restipulatory*  
 part ; not as of two opposite Covenants,  
 (as you distinguish them, *Gen.* 17.) but  
 as the just and necessary parts of one and  
 the same Covenant. It also distinguishes  
 betwixt Vows made by Men to God in  
 some

some particular Cafes, and the Covenant of Grace betwixt God and them. But what's all this to your purpose? Or in what point doth it touch my *Argument*? You desire me to cast mine eye upon *Ezek. 16.* and *Pfal. 89.* I have done so, and that impartially; and do assure you, I admire why you produce them against my *Argument*. That in *Ezek.* speaks of the enlargement of the Church by the accession of the *Gentiles* to it; and the sense of those words seems to me to be this; That this enlargement of the Church is a gracious addition, or something beyond what God had ever done in his former dispensations of the Covenant to that People. And for *Pfal. 89.* I know not what you meant to produce it for, unless it be to prove what I never denied, That notwithstanding our failures in duty towards God, God will still keep his Covenant with us; though he will visit the Iniquities of his Covenant-people with a Rod.

To your second Answer, That we are to deliberate the terms, and count the cost, with respect to those duties, which are in order to the participation of the full end of the Covenant in glory: by which, I suppose, you mean Self-denial, Perse-

verance, &c. I have no Controversy with you about that. Our Question is, Whether there be no deliberations required of, or to be performed by men, who are not yet in Christ by justifying Faith, but under some preparatory works towards Faith? And whether at the very time of their closing with Christ, there be not a consent of the Will unto those terms required of them? If you say there be (as by the places I alledged it evidently appears there are) then you yield the point I contend for. If you say they are not before, or at the time of believing, to consider any terms, or give their consent to them by word or writing; such an Answer would fly in the very face of those Scriptures I produced: for then a man may be in covenant without his own consent: he that deliberates not, consents not; *non consentit, qui non sentit*. And therefore you durst not speak it out (for which modesty I commend you) and so leave me with half an answer, not touching that part, *viz.* Antecedent deliberations which were concerned in this *Argument*. And now let your most partial Friends judge, Whether from this performance of yours, you have any just ground for that vain boast which

which concludes your Answer; viz.  
 “That the Covenants themselves, which  
 “those Privileges are bottomed on, are now  
 “repealed, and that there is no room left  
 “for any other Argument to infer the Bap-  
 “tism of Infants: at least, I shall willingly  
 commit it to the judgment of all intelligent  
 and impartial Readers, Whether Mr. Cary  
 hath any real ground in this performance  
 of his, for such a Thrafonical Conclusion,  
 such a vain and fullsome Boast?

I find that with like confidence he hath  
 also attempted a Reply to Mr. Joseph  
 Whiston, a Reverend, Learned, and  
 Aged Divine, who hath accurately and  
 successfully defended God’s Covenant  
 with Abraham, against Mr. Cox; and  
 doubt not, if Mr. Cary, and his Party,  
 have but confidence enough to expose  
 it to the publick view, and to adventure the  
 Cause of Infant-baptism upon it, the World  
 will quickly see an end of this long-con-  
 tinued and unhappy Controversy, which  
 hath vexed the Church of God, and alie-  
 nated the Affections of good Men: and  
 that the Wisdom of Providence hath per-  
 mitted and over-ruled this last Attempt,  
 to the singular advantage of the Truths  
 of God, and tranquillity of good Men,  
 whose concernment (at this time especi-

ally) is rather to strengthen their Faith, and heighten their Encouragements from God's gracious Covenant, than to undermine it, when all things beside it are shaking and tottering round about them.

And now, Sir, for a *Coronis* to all those things that have been controverted betwixt us about the Covenants of God, and the right of Believers Infants to Baptism resulting from one of them, which I have asserted and argued against you in my first *Answer*, and you have silently and wholly pass'd over in your *Reply*, hoping to destroy them all at once, by proving God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. to be a pure *Adam's* Covenant of Works; I judge it necessary, as matters now lie between us, to give the Reader the grounds and reasons of my Faith and Practice with respect unto the Ordinance of Infant Baptism, and that as succinctly and clearly as I can, in the following *Theses*; which being laid together by an unprejudiced and considerative Reader, will, I think, amount to more than a strong probability, That *it is the will of God, that the Infant-seed of Believers ought now to be baptized.*

But

But here I must remind the Reader, P. 61, 62.  
and beg him to review what I have said  
before in the third *Cause of Errors*, That  
to arrive to satisfaction in this point, re-  
quires a due and serious search of the  
whole Word of God, with a sedate, ra-  
tional, and impartial mind; comparing  
one thing with another, though they lie  
scattered at a distance in the Scriptures;  
some in the *Old Testament*, and some in  
the *New*. Bring but these things to an  
interview, as we do in discovering the  
change of the Sabbath, and we may arrive  
unto a due satisfaction of the Will of God  
herein. This; I confess, calls for strength  
of mind, great sedulity, attention and  
impartiality; and yet what man would  
think all this too much, if it were but to  
clear his Childrens Title unto a small  
Earthly Inheritance? I intend not to  
give the Reader here an account of all the  
Arguments drawn from several Scripture  
*Topics* by the strenuous Defenders of In-  
fants Baptism; but to keep only to the  
Arguments drawn from God's Covenant  
with *Abraham*, Gen. 17. which is the  
Scripture mainly controverted betwixt  
us: You affirming boldly and dange-  
rously, that Covenant to be no other than  
an *Adam's* Covenant of Works; and I  
S 4 justly

justly denying and abhorring your Position upon the grounds and reasons before given, which you neither have, nor ever will be able to destroy. Now that the Reader, who hath neither time, nor ability, to reade the Larger, and more elaborate Treatises on this Subject, may *ως εν τωπε*, in one short view, see the deduction of Believers Infants right to Baptism from this Gospel-covenant of God with *Abraham*, I shall gather the substance of what I contend for, and lay it as clearly as I can before the Eyes of my Reader in the following *Theses*; which being distinctly considered as to the evident truth of each, and then rationally compared one with the other, he will see how each fortifies other, and how all together do strongly confirm this Conclusion, That the Infants of Believers under the Gospel, as they naturally descend from *Abraham's* Spiritual Seed, are therefore Partakers at least of the External Privileges of the visible Church, and therefore ought now to be baptized:

### Thesis I.

*It hath pleased God in all Ages of the World, since man was created, to deal with his Church and People by way of Covenant,*  
and

*and in the same way he will still deal with them unto the end of the World.*

God might have dealt with us in a supream way of mere Sovereignty and Dominion, commanding what Duties he pleased, and establishing his Commands by what Penalties he had pleased, and never have brought himself under the tie and obligation of a Covenant to his own Creatures: but he chuses to deal familiarly with his People, the way of Covenanting being a familiar way, 2 Sam.

7. 19. *Is this the manner of men, O Lord God! or (as Junius renders it) and that after the manner of men, O Lord God!*

'Tis a way full of condescending grace and goodness: he is willing hereby his People should know what they may certainly expect from their God, as well as what their God requires of them. Hereby also he will furnish them with mighty Pleas and Arguments in Prayer, succour their Faith against Temptations; strengthen their hands in duties of Obedience, sweeten their Obedience to them, and discriminate his own People from the World.

As soon therefore as man was created and placed in Paradise, being made upright, and throughly furnished with Abilities



lities perfectly and compleatly to obey all the Commands of his Maker ; the Lord immediately entred into the *Covenant of Works* with him , and with all his natural Posterity in him : and in this Covenant his standing or falling was according to the perfection and constancy of his personal Obedience, *Gen. 2. 17. Gal. 3. 10.* But in this First Covenant of Works no provision at all was made for his recovery (in case of the least failure) by his repentance or better obedience ; but the Curse immediately seized both Soul and Body : and Sin by the Fall entring into Man's nature, totally disabled him to the perfect performance of any one Duty, as that Covenant required it to be done, *Rom. 8. 3.* nor would God accept any Repentance , or after-endeavours, in lieu of that perfect Obedience due by Law. So that from the Fall of *Adam*, to the end of the World, this Covenant ceaseth as a Covenant of Life, or a Covenant able to give Righteousness and Life unto all Mankind for evermore, *Rom. 3. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight. Gal. 2. 16. by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified. Gal. 3. 11. But that no Man is justified by the Law in the sight of*

of God, is evident. And it being so evident, that Righteousness and Life being for ever impossible to be obtained upon the terms of *Adam's* Covenant, it must therefore be a self-evident truth, That *since the Fall, God never did, and to the end of the World he never will open that way or door to Life (thus block'd up by an absolute impossibility) for the justification and salvation of any Man.*

## Thesis II.

*Soon after the violation and cessation of this first Covenant, as a Covenant of Life, it pleased the Lord to open and publish the second Covenant of Grace by Jesus Christ, the first dawning whereof we find in Gen. 3. 15. where the Seed is promised which shall bruise the Serpent's head. And though this be but a very short, and somewhat obscure discovery of Man's Remedy and Salvation by Christ; yet was it a joyful sound to the ears of God's people, it was even life from the dead to the Believers of those times. For we may rationally conclude, That that space of time betwixt the breaking of the first, and making of the second Covenant; was the most dismal period of time that ever the World did, or shall see. This Covenant*  
of

of Grace now took place of the Covenant of Works, comprehended all Believers in the bosom of it. The Covenant of Works took place from the time it was made until the fall of *Adam*, and then was abolished as a Life-giving Covenant. The second Covenant took place from the time it was made soon after the fall, and is to continue to the end of the World. And these only are the two Covenants God hath made with Men; the latter succeeding the former, and commencing from its expiration; but both cannot possibly be in force together at the same time, and upon the same persons, as co-ordinate Covenants of Life and Salvation. For in co-ordination they expel and destroy each other, *Gal. 5. 4. Whosoever of you are justified by the Law, ye are fallen from Grace.* The first Covenant was a Covenant without a Mediator; the second is a Covenant with a Mediator. Place a Believer under both at once, or put these two Covenants in co-ordination, and that which results will be a pure contradiction, *viz.* That a Man is saved without a Mediator, and yet by a Mediator. Moreover, if there be a way to Life without a Mediator, there was no need to make a Covenant in and with

with a Mediator ; nor can those words of Christ be true, *Joh. 4. 6. I am the way, the truth, and the life : no man cometh to the Father but by me.*

The Righteousness of the first Covenant was within Man himself ; the Righteousness of the second Covenant is without Man in Christ. Put these two in co-ordination, and that which results is as pure a contradiction as the former ; *viz.* That a Man is justified by a Righteousness within him, and yet is justified by a Righteousness without him ; expressly contrary to the Apostle's conclusion, *Rom. 3. 20. Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.* It is therefore an intolerable absurdity to place believers under both these Covenants at the same time ; under the Curse of the first, and Blessing of the second. For whensoever the state of any person is changed by Justification, his Covenant is changed with his State ; *Col. 1. 13.* 'Tis as unimaginable that a Believer should thus stand under both Covenants, as it is to imagine that a Man may be born of two Mothers, *Gal. 4. 22, 23, 24, 25.* or a Woman lawfully Married to two Husbands, *Rom. 7. 1, 2, 3, 4.* and more absurd (if it be possible any thing

thing can be more absurd) to attribute the most glorious privilege of the Covenant of Grace, (viz. *I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee*, Gen. 17.7.) to the impotent and abolished Covenant of Works; both which absurdities are asserted in defence of *Antipædobaptism*.

And though it be true, that after the first Edition of the Covenant of Grace, the matter of the first Covenant was represented to the *Israelites* in the Moral Law; yet that representation was intended and designed to be subservient, and added to the Promise, *Gal. 3. 19.* and so (as an Acute and Learned Divine \* speaks) the very *Decalogue* or *Moral Law* it self pertained to the Covenant of Grace; yea, in some sort flowed out of this Covenant, as it was promulged by the Counsel of God to be serviceable to it; both *antecedently* to lead Men by the conviction of sin, fear of wrath, and self-despair, to the Covenant of Grace; and also consequently as it is a pattern of Obedience and Rule of Holiness. For had it been published as a Covenant designed intentionally to its primitive use and end, it had totally frustrated the Covenant of Grace.

\* Turretini, Pars  
2da. loc.  
12. p. 248.

## Thesis III.

*Though the primordial Light or first glimmerings of this Covenant of Grace, were comparatively weak and obscure; yet from the first publication of it to Adam, God in all Ages hath been amplifying the privileges, and heightning the glory of this second Covenant in all the after expreffures and editions of it unto this day, and will more and more amplify and illustrate it to the end of the World.*

That first Promise, *Gen. 3. 15.* is like the first small Spring or Head of a great River, which the farther it runs, the bigger it grows by the accession of more Waters to it. Or like the Sun in the Heavens, which the higher it mounts, the more bright and glorious the day still grows.

In that period of time, betwixt *Adam* and *Abraham*, we find no token of God's Covenant ordered therein to be applied to the Infant-Seed of Believers. But in that second Edition of the Covenant to *Abraham*, the privileges of the Covenant were amplified, and his Infant-Seed, not only taken into the Covenant (as they were before) but also added to the visible Church, by receiving the token of the

the Covenant, which then was Circumcision; and so here is a great addition made to the visible Church, even the whole Infant Off-spring of adult Believers.

From that period, until the coming of the *Messiah* in the flesh, the *Jewish* Church, and their Infant-Seed, except only some few Profelytes out of the Gentile Nations, made up the visible Church of God, and the poor *Gentiles* were without Christ, being aliens from the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and strangers from the Covenants of Promise, having no hope, and without God in the World, *Ephes.* 2. 12. but in this glorious third period, the Covenant again enlarges it self more than before, and the Privileges of it are no longer limited and restrained to the *Jewish* Believers and their Infant-Seed; but the *Gentiles* also are taken into the Covenant, and the door of Faith was opened unto them, *Acts* 14. 27. the partition-wall was now broken down, which separated the Church from the *Gentile* World, *Eph.* 2. 14. This was a glorious enlargement of the Covenant, and many glorious Prophecies and Promises were fulfilled in it; such as those, *Isa.* 11. 10. and 42. 1, 6. 49. 22. 54. 3. 60. 3, 5, 11, 16. 62. 2, &c. And

And though the Covenant, as to its external part, seems to have lost ground in the breaking off of the *Jewish* Nation from the Church ; yet, like the Sea, what it loses in one place, it gains with advantage upon another ; the addition of many *Gentile*-Nations to the Church, more than recompences for the present breaking off of that one Nation of the *Jews*. And indeed they are broken off but for a time ; for God shall Graff them in again, *Rom.* 11. 23. This therefore being the design of God, and steddy Course of his Covenant of Grace, more and more to enlarge it self in all Ages ; nothing can be more opposite to the nature of this Covenant, than to narrow and contract its privileges in its farther progress, and cut off a whole *Species* from it, which it formerly took in.

*Thesis IV.*

It is past all doubt and contradiction, that the Infant-Seed of *Abraham*, under the second edition of the Covenant of Grace, were taken with their believing Parents into God's gracious Covenant, had the Seal of that Covenant applied to them, and were thereby added to the visible Church, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11.

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which was a gracious Privilege of the Covenant superadded to all the former, and such as sweeps away all the frivolous and groundless cavils and exceptions of those that object the incapacity of Infants to enter into Covenant with God, or receive benefit from the external privileges of the visible Church. Nor can the subtlest enemy to Infants Baptism, give us a convincing reason why the Infants of *Gentile* Believers are not equally capable of the same benefits that the Infants of *Jewish* Believers were, if they still stand under the same Covenant that the former stood under; and God hath no where repealed the gracious Grant formerly made to the Infant-Seed of his Covenant-people.

*Thesis V.*

It is to me clear beyond all contradiction, from *Rom. 11. 17.* *If some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild Olive-tree, wert grafted in amongst them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the Olive-tree:* I say, I can scarce desire a clearer Scripture-light than this Text gives, to satisfy my understanding in this case, That when God brake off the unbelieving *Jews* from the Church,  
both

both Parents and Children together ; the Believing *Gentiles*, which are as truly *Abraham's* Seed as they were, *Gal.* 3. 29. yea, the more excellent Seed of *Abraham*, were implanted or ingrafted in their room, and do as amply enjoy the Privileges of that Covenant, both internal and external, for themselves, and for their Infant-Seed, as ever any Members of the *Jewish* Church did or could do.

Our Adversaries in this Controversy do pitifully and apparently shuffle here, and invent many strange and unintelligible distinctions to be-cloud the light of this famous Text. What they are, and how they are baffled, the Reader will easily discern from what hath already pass'd betwixt my Antagonist and me, in *p.* 108, &c. of my *Vindicia Legis & fœderis*. It is plain, that *Abraham* is the root, the Olive-tree the Visible Church ; the Sap and Fatness of the Olive, are Church Ordinances and Covenant-Privileges ; the *Gentile* Believers, who are *Abraham's* Seed according to Promise, are the ingrafted Branches standing in the place of the natural Branches, and with them, or in like manner as they did, partaking of the Root and Fatness of the Olive-Tree, that is, as really and amply enjoy-

ing all the immunities, benefits and privileges of the Church and Covenant (amongst which the initiating Sign was one, and a chief one too) as ever the natural Branches that were broken off, that is, the *Jewish* Parents and their Children, did or might have done. And to deny this (as before was noted) is to straiten Covenant-privileges in their farther progress.

*Thesis VI.*

Suitably hereunto we find, that no sooner was the Christian Church constituted, and the Believing *Gentiles* by Faith added to it; but the Children of such Believing Parents are declared to be federally Holy, *1 Cor. 7. 14.* and the unbelieving *Jews*, who were superstitiously fond of Circumcision, and prejudiced against Baptism as an injurious innovation, are by the *Apostle* perswaded to submit themselves to it, *Acts 2. 38, 39.* assuring them, that the same Promise, *viz. I will be a God to thee, and to thy seed after thee,* is now as effectually sealed to them and their Children by Baptism, as it was in the former Age by Circumcision: And that the *Gentiles* which are yet a far off, whenever God shall call them, shall equally

equally enjoy the same Privilege, both for themselves and for their Children also.

We also find a Commission given by Christ to the Disciples, *Matt.* 28. 19, 20. *To disciple all nations, baptizing them, &c.* from which Discipleship, Infants ought not to be excluded, *Acts* 15. 10. Yea, we find, that as at the institution of Circumcision, *Abraham* the Father and Master of the Family was first circumcised in his own person, and then his whole household, *Gen.* 17. 23, 24. Answerably, as soon as any person by Conversion, or publick profession of Faith, became a visible Child of *Abraham*, that person was first Baptized, and the whole Household with him or her, *Acts* 16. 33. 15. 'Tis unreasonable to put us upon the proof, that there were Infants in those Houses; it being more than probable, that in such frequent Baptizing of Households belonging to Believers, there were some Infants; but if there were none, 'tis enough for us to prove from their foederal holiness, *1 Cor.* 7. 14. and the extent of God's Promise to them, *Acts* 2. 38, 39. If there had been never so many Infants in those Households, they might and ought to have been Baptized. How the

true sense and scope of the two last mentioned Scriptures are maintained and vindicated against Mr. Cary's corrupt glosses and interpretations; see my *Vindicia Legis & Fæderis*, pag. 90. 91. We do not lay the stress of Infants Baptism upon such *strictures* as the Baptizings of the Households of Believers, or Christ's taking up in his Arms, and blessing the little ones that were brought to him. These and many other such things found in the History of *Christ*, and *Acts of the Apostles*, have their use and service to fortify that Doctrine. But if we can produce no example of any Believer's Infant Baptized, the merit of the Cause lies not in the matter of fact, but Covenant-right. For our Adversaries themselves, if we go to matter of fact, will be hard put to it to produce us one instance out of the *New-Testament* of any Child of a Believing Christian whose Baptism was deferred, or by Christ or his Apostles ordered to be deferred, until he attained the years of maturity, and made a personal profession of Faith himself.

## Thesis VII.

*The change of the Token and Seal of the Covenant from Circumcision to Baptism, will by no means infer the change or diversity of the Covenants, especially when the latter comes into the place, and serves to the same use and end with the former, as it is manifest Baptism doth, from Col. 2. 11, 12. as hath been, I think, sufficiently argued against Mr. Cary's glosses and exceptions, pag. 100, 101. of my Vindiciæ Legis & Fœderis. The Covenant is still the same Covenant of Grace, though the external initiating sign be changed. For what is the substantial part of the Covenant of Grace now, but the same it was to Abraham and his Seed before? Is not this our Covenant of Grace, Heb. 8. 10. I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people? And in what words was Abraham's Covenant expressed, Gen. 17. 7. I will establish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee in their generations for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee. This makes Abraham's Covenant, sealed to him and his Seed, as truly and properly the Covenant of Grace, as that which Baptism now seals to Believers and their*

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Seed. The rash ignorance of those that affirm, God may become a People's God in the way of a special interest, by virtue of the broken and abolished Covenant of works, rather deserves sharp reprehension, and sad lamentation, than a confutation; which, nevertheless out of respect to my Friend Mr. Cary, I have given it in its proper place in this Rejoynder.

I hope by this time I have made it evident, That the defenders of Infants Baptism, as it is established upon God's Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.* have not so mistaken their Ground, as Mr. Cary hath, by his endeavours to carry that Covenant as an *Adam's Covenant of Works*, through such a multitude of other errors and absurdities, as he draws along with it in his way of reasoning.

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*A Postscript*

## *A Postscript to Mr. Cary.*

S I R,

I Resolved not to disturb my mind with your passionate provoking Language, at least whil'st I was busily employed in searching for Reason and Argument (two scarce Commodities) amongst heaps of vain and fullsome words. Nor will I now imitate your folly and rudeness, lest I become an *Offender*, whilst I am to act the part of a *Reprover*. When I read your Title, *A Just and Sober Reply*, and presently fell in amongst rude insults, silly evasions, and such inartificial discourses as follow in your Book; I began to challenge you in my thoughts, for matching such bad stuff with so fair and lovely a *Title*: But a second thought quickly corrected the former; for I considered no Man living could justly forbid the Marriage betwixt your Book and its Title, since there is not the least kindred or relation between them.

Had your Answers been *just*, you would have observed the Rules of a *Respondent*, which you have not done: And if they had been *sober*, you had never been



been so free in your reproaches, and sparing in your Arguments as you have been. Is this the Man, of whom it is said in the *Epistle to his Solemn Call*, That *his Lines are free from reflection and reproach towards those of the persuasion he contends with*? Is this my old friendly Neighbour? It calls to my mind the *Italian Proverb*, *God keep us from our Friends, and we will do what we can to keep our selves from our Enemies*. And though you act the part of an Enemy, you shall be my Friend whether you will or no. If you will not be my Friend out of Love, I will make you so by a good improvement of your Hatred.

I have been musing with my self, what might be the true cause of all your rage against my Book; One while I thought it proceeded from want of *discretion*, that you were not able to distinguish betwixt an Adversary in a *Controversie*, and an Adversary to the *Person*; but thought every blow that was given to your Error, must needs be a mortal wound to your Reputation. But, Sir, how close and smart soever my Discourses against your Errors be, I'm sure they are more full of civility and respect to you, than such a *Reply* as you have made deserves: And  
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if in exposing your Errors, your Reputation be expos'd, you must blame them for occasioning it, and not me.

Some times I thought it an effect of your *Policy*, that when followed close, and hard put to it, you endeavoured an escape this way. *Camero* speaking of this kind of subtilty in his Adversaries, saith, *Faciunt quod quarundam ferarum ingenium est, ut fœtore & graveolentia, defecta jam viribus, ac fracta venatorem abigunt.* Some cunning Animals, as Foxes, &c. when pursued at the heels, drive away both Dogs and Huntsmen with their intolerable stench. And *Hierom* long ago told *Helvidius*, his Adversary, *Arbitror te veritate convictum, ad maledicta converti*; being vanquished by Truth, he betook himself to ill Language. After the same manner you act here, being no longer able to defend your self by solid and sober ratiocination, you trust to your faculty in crimination. Bad Causes only drive Men into such refuges.

In a word, I am satisfied nothing but your extravagant zeal for your Idolized Opinion, could have thrown you into such disingenuous Methods and Artifices as these. The *Ephesians* were quiet enough till their *Diana* began to totter.

Your

Your passionate Outcries signify to me, something is touched to the quick, which you are more fondly in love with than you ought. When one told *Luther* what hideous Out-cries his Enemies made against him, and how they reviled him in their Books : *I know by their roaring* (said he) *that I have hit them right.*

You tell me in your *Reply*, p. 24. That you perceive *I have a mighty itch to find out your Absurdities.* I wish, Sir, you were no more troubled with the itch after them, than I am after the discovery of them. Had I affected such Employments, I could easily have gathered three to one out of your Book, more than I did : And have represented those I gather'd, much more odiously (and yet justly) than I did. But Friendship constrain'd me to handle them (because yours) as gently as I could.

I might have justly charg'd you from what you say, p. 174, 175. of your *Solemn Call* : where you place all the Believers on Earth, without exception of any, under the Covenant of Works, as a ministration of Death and Condemnation; and the severest Penalties of a dreadful Curse : I might thereupon have  
justly

justly charg'd you for presenting to the World such a monstrous Sight as was never seen before since the Creation, *viz.* A whole Church of condemned and cursed Believers. This I might as well have charged upon your Position, and done it no wrong.

I could tell you from what you say, p. 76. of your Reply, *That God doth indeed in the Covenant of Works make over himself to Sinners, to be their God in a way of special Interest; but it being upon such hard terms, that it is utterly impossible that way to attain unto life, &c.* I could justly have told you, That these Passages of yours, drop pure nonsense upon the Reader's Understanding: as if Salvation were impossible to be attain'd by the same Covenant wherein God becomes our God, and makes over himself by way of special interest, to us.

Had I had an itch to expose the Burlesque and ridiculous Stuff, which lies obvious enough in your Book; I should then have told your Reader, That according to your Doctrine, how opposite and inconsistent soever the two Covenants of Works and Grace be, yet the same Subjects, *viz.* Believers, may at once, not only stand under them both,  
but

but that the same common Seal, *viz.* Circumcision, equally ratifies and confirms them both; for you allow in your *Call*, p. 205. *That it sealed the Covenant of Grace to believing Abraham, and yet was a Seal of the Covenant of Works*, yea the very condition of that Covenant, as you frequently affirm it to be. *Vide*, p. 81. of your *Reply*, and *Passim*.

I could as easily and justly have told you, That the most malicious *Papist* could scarcely have invented a more horrid Reproach against our famous Orthodox Protestant Divines, than you (I dare not say maliciously, but) ignorantly have done, when you charge such men as Mr. *Francis Roberts*, Mr. *Obadiah Sedgwick*; and indeed all that assert the Law, complexly taken, to be an obsecurer Covenant of Grace; that they comprize perfect doing with the consequent Curse for non-performance; and believing in Christ unto life and salvation in one and the same Covenant. This is an intolerable abuse of yours, p. 5. of your *Reply*. They generally assert the Law, in that complex sense and latitude you take it, to be a true Covenant of Grace, though more obscurely administered; and that the distinction of the Covenants in-

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to Old and New, is no parallel distinction with that of Works and Grace, or *Christ's* and *Adam's* Covenant. Your publick recantation of the Injury you have done the very Protestant Cause herein, is your unquestionable duty, yet scarce a due reparation of the Injury.

In a word, I cannot but look upon it as a discovery of your great weakness, That when you meet with such a difficulty as poses your Understanding, and you cannot possibly reconcile with your Notion; as that of *Paul's* circumcising *Timothy*, and you affirming that the very act of Circumcision did in its own nature oblige all on whom it pass'd, to the perfect observation of the Law for Righteousness. You will rather chuse to leave the blessed *Apostle* in a contradiction to his own Doctrine, than to your vain Notion; For what do you say, p. 95. of your *Reply*? *That however the case stood in that respect, this is certain, &c.* It also argues weakness in you to insist upon, aggravate, jeer, and reproach at that rate you do, p. 83. of your *Reply*. For the mistake, and misplacing of one Figure, viz. *Gen. 12.* for *Gen. 17.* as if the merit of the whole Cause depended on it.

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The like I may say of your charging me with Nonsense, for putting *Gen.* 17. 7, 8. for *Gen.* 17. 9, 10. when yet you your self, p. 205. of your *Call*, tell us, That Circumcision was appointed as a Sign or Token of the Covenant, *Gen.* 17. 7, 8, 9. What pitiful Trifles are these to raise such a mighty triumph upon? When *Dureus* accused our famous *Whitaker* for one or two trivial verbal Mistakes, *Whitaker* return'd him the same Answer I shall give you, *Benè habet, his in rebus non vertuntur fortuna Ecclesie.* 'Tis well the Case of the Church depends not upon such Trifles.

For a Conclusion; I do seriously warn all men to beware of receiving Doctrines so destructive to the great Truths of the Gospel as these are. And I do solemnly profess, I have not designedly strained them, to cast reproach upon him that publish'd them; But the matters are so plain, that if Mr. *Cary* will maintain his Positions, not only my self, but every intelligent Reader, will be easily able to fasten all those odious Consequents upon him, after all his Apologies.

Sir,

Sir, in a word, I dare not say; but you are a good Man; but since I read your two Books, you have made me Think more than once of what one said of *Jonah* after he had read his History; that he was a strange Man of a good Man; yet as strange a good Man as you are, I hope to meet you with a sounder Head, and better Spirit, in Heaven.

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## APPENDIX:

Giving a brief Account of the Rise and Growth of ANTI-NOMIANISM; the deduction of the principal Errors of that Sect: With modest and seasonable Reflections upon them.

THE Design of the following Sheets, cast in as a *Mantissa* to the foregoing Discourse of *Errors*, is principally to discharge and free the Free-grace of God from those dangerous Errors, which fight against it under its own Colours; partly to prevent the seduction of some that stagger; and lastly, (though least of all) to vindicate my own Doctrine, the scope and current whereof hath always been, and shall ever be, to exalt the Free-grace of God in Christ, to draw the vilest of Sinners.

to him, and relieve the distressed Consciences of Sin-burthened Christians.

But notwithstanding my utmost care and caution, some have been apt to censure it, as if in some things it had a tang of *Antinomianism*: But if my publick or private Discourses be the faithful Messengers of my Judgment and Heart, (as I hope they are) nothing can be found in any of them casting a friendly aspect upon any of their Principles, which I here justly censure as erroneous.

Three things I principally aim at in this short *Appendix*.

1. To give the Reader the most probable Rise of *Antinomianism*.
  2. An Account of the principal Errors of that Sect.
  3. To confirm and establish Christians against them, by sound Reasons back'd with Scripture-authority.
- And

# I.

## *Of the Rise of Antinomianism.*

The Scriptures foreseeing there would arise such a sort of Men in the Church as would wax wanton against Christ, and turn his Grace into lasciviousness; hath not only cautioned us in general to beware of such Opinions as corrupt the Do-

## Of Antinomianism.

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Doctrine of Free-grace, *Rom. 6. 1, 2.*  
*Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid:* but hath particularly indigitated and marked those very Opinions by which it would be abused, and made abundant provision against them; as namely,

1. All slighting and vilifying Opinions or Expressions of the Holy Law of God, *Rom. 7. 7, 12.*

2. All Opinions and Principles inclining men to a careless disregard and neglect of the Duties of Obedience, under pretence of Free-grace and Liberty by Christ, *Jam. 2. Matth. 25.*

3. All Opinions neglecting or slighting Sanctification as the evidence of our Justification, and rendring it needless or sinful to try the state of our Souls by the Graces of the Spirit wrought in us, which is the principal scope of the First *Epistle of John.*

Notwithstanding, such is the wickedness of some, and weakness of others, that in all Ages (especially the last past, and present) men have audaciously broken in upon the Doctrine of Free-grace; and notoriously violated and corrupted it, to the great reproach of Christ, scandal of the World, and hardning of the Enemies

mies of Reformation. Behold (saith Contzen the Jesuit on Matth. 24.) the fruit of Protestantism, and their Gospel-preaching.

Nothing is more opposite to looseness than the Free-grace of God, which teacheth us, *That denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.* Nor can it without manifest violence be made pliable to such wicked purposes. And therefore the Apostle tells us, *Jude 4.* That this is done by *turning* the Grace of our Lord into lasciviousness: *μεταστρέφουσιν*, transferring it, scil. *ῥαδιὰν* interpretatione, by a corrupt, abusive interpretation, to such uses and purposes as it abhors. No such wanton, licentious Conclusions can be inferr'd from the Gospel-doctrines of Grace and Liberty, but by wresting them against their true scope and intent, by the wicked Arts and Practices of Deceivers upon them.

The Gospel makes Sin more odious than ever the Law did, and discovers the punishment of it in a more severe and dreadful manner, than ever it was discovered before, *Heb. 2. 2, 3.* For if the word spoken by Angels were steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received

ceived a just recompence of reward ; How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation ? It shews our obligations to duty, to be stronger than ever ; and our encouragements to holiness greater than ever ; 2 Cor. 7, 1. and yet corrupt Nature will be still tempting men to corrupt and abuse it. The more luscious the Food is, the more men are apt to surfeit upon it.

This perversion and abuse of Free-grace and Christian-liberty, is justly chargeable (though upon different accounts) both upon wicked, and good Men. Wicked Men corrupt it designedly, that by entitling God to their Sins, they might sin the more quietly and securely. So the Devil instigated the *Heathens* to sin against the Light and Law of Nature, by representing their gods to them as drunken and lascivious Deities. So the *Nicolaitans*, and School of *Simon*, and after them the *Gnosticks*, and other *Hereticks*, in the very dawning of Gospel Light and Liberty, began presently to loose the bond of restraint from their Lusts, under pretence of Grace and Liberty. The *Ætiani* blushed not to teach, That Sin, and perseverance in Sin, could hurt the Salvation of none,

August.  
de Hæres.  
Tom. 6.  
Hæres. 54.

so that they would embrace their Principles.

Calv. ad-  
versus Li-  
bert. cō. 2.

How vile and abominable Inferences the *Manichæans*, *Valentinians*, and *Cerdonites*, drew from the Grace and Liberty of the Gospel in the following Ages, I had rather mourn over, than recite. And if we come down to the 15th Century, we shall find the *Libertines* of those days as deeply drenched in this Sin, as most that went before them. Calvin mournfully observes, That under pretence of Christian-liberty, they trampled all Godliness under foot. The vile Courses their loose Opinions soon carried them into, plainly discovered for what intents and purposes they were projected and calculated: and he that reads the Preface to that Grave and Learned Mr. *Thomas Gataker's* Book, entituled, *God's Eye upon Israel*, will find, That some *Antinomians* of our days are not much behind the worst and vilest of them. One of them cries out, *Away with the Law, away with the Law, it cuts off a man's Legs, and then bids him walk.* Another saith, *Tis as possible for Christ himself to sin, as for a Child of God to sin. That if a man by the Spirit know himself to be in the state of grace, though he be drunk, or commit murder,*

ther, God sees no sin in him : with much more of the same Bran, which I will not transcribe.

But others there be, whose Judgments are unhappily tainted and leavened with these loose Doctrines; yet being in the main godly persons, they dare not take liberty to sin, or live in the neglect of known duties, though their Principles too much incline that way. But though they dare not, others will, who imbibe corrupt notions from them; and the renowned Piety of the Authors will be no antidote against the danger, but make the Poison operate the more powerfully, by receiving it in such a vehicle. Now it is highly probable such men as these might be charmed into such dangerous Opinions upon such accounts as these.

(1.) 'Tis like some of them might have felt in themselves the anguish of a perplexed Conscience under sin; and not being able to live with these terrors of the Law, and dismal fears of Conscience, might too hastily snatch at those Doctrines which promise them relief and ease, as I noted before in the 5th Cause of my *Treatise of Errors*. And that this is not a guess at random, will appear from the very Title-page of Mr. Salt-marsh's



marsh's Book of Free-grace, where (as an inducement to the Reader to swallow his *Antinomian* Doctrine) he shews him this curious Bait. *It is* (saith he) *an experiment of Jesus Christ upon one who hath been in the bondage of a troubled Conscience at times for the space of about twelve years, till now upon a clearer discovery of Jesus Christ in the Gospel, &c.*

(2.) Others have been induced to espouse these Opinions from the excess of their Zeal against the Errors of the *Papists*, who have notoriously corrupted the Doctrine of Justification by Free-grace; decried *imputed*, and exalted *inherent* Righteousness above it. The *Papists* have designedly and industriously sealed up the Scriptures from the People, lest they should there discover those sovereign and effectual Remedies which God hath provided for their distressed Consciences, in the riches of his own Grace, and the meritorious Death of Christ; and so all their *Masses*, *Pilgrimages*, *Auricular Confessions*, with all their dear *Indulgences*, should lie upon their hands as stale and cheap Commodities. *Oh*, (said Stephen Gardiner) *let not this gap of Free-grace be opened to the People.*

But

But as soon as the Light of Reformation had discovered the Free-grace of God to Sinners, (which is indeed the only effectual remedy of distressed Consciences) and by the same Light the horrid Cheats of the Man of Sin were discovered; all good men, who were enlightened by the Reformation, justly and deeply abhorred *Popery*, as the Enemy of the Grace of God, and true Peace of Conscience, and fixed themselves upon the sound and comfortable Doctrines of Justification by Faith through the alone Righteousness of Christ. Mean while thankfully acknowledging, that they which believe, ought also to maintain good Works. But others there were, transported by an indiscreet Zeal, who have almost bended the Grace of God as far too much the other way, and have both spoken and written many things very unbecoming the Grace of God, and tending to looseness and neglect of Duty.

(3.) 'Tis manifest that others of them have been ingulphed, and suckt into those dangerous Quick-sands of *Antinomian* Errors, by separating the Spirit from the written Word: If once a man pretend the Spirit without the Scriptures  
to

to be his Rule, whither will not his own deluding Fancies carry him under a vain and sinful pretence of the Spirit !

In the Year 1528. when *Helsar*, *Traier* and *Seekler*, were confuted by *Hallerus* ; and their Errors about Oaths, Magistrates, and Pædo-baptism were detected by him, and by *Colvius* at *Bern*, that which they had to say for themselves was, That *the Spirit taught them otherwise than the letter of the Scriptures speaks*. So dangerous it is to separate what God hath conjoined, and father our own Fancies upon the Holy Spirit.

(4.) And it is not unlike, but a comparative weakness and injudiciousness of mind meeting with a fervent zeal for Christ, and his Glory, may induce others to espouse such taking and plausible, tho pernicious, Doctrines. They are not aware of the dangerous Consequences of the Opinions they embrace, and what looseness may be occasioned by them. I speak not of Occasions taken, but given, by such Opinions and Expressions. A good Man will draw excellent Inferences of duty from the very same Doctrine. Instance that of the shortness of time, from whence the Apostle infers abstinence, strictness and diligence, 1 Cor.

7. 29. but the *Epicure* infers all manner of dissolute and licentious practices, *Let us eat and drink; for to morrow we shall die,* 1 Cor. 15 22. The best Doctrines are this way liable to abuse.

But let all good men beware of such Opinions and Expressions as give an handle to wicked men to abuse the Grace of God, which haply the Author himself dare not do, and may strongly hope others may not do: but if the Principle will yield it, 'tis in vain to think corrupt Nature will not catch at it, and make a vile use, and dangerous improvement of it.

For example; If such a Principle as this be asserted for a truth before the World, *That men need not fear that any, or all the Sins they commit, shall do them any hurt*; let the Author, or any man in the World warn, and caution Readers (as the *Antinomian* Author of that Expression hath done) not to abuse this Doctrine, 'tis to no purpose. The Doctrine it self is full of dangerous Consequents, and wicked men have the best skill to infer and draw them forth to cherish and countenance their Lusts: that which the Author might design for the relief of the distressed, quickly turns it self into poison  
in

in the bowels of the wicked ; nor can we excuse it by saying any Gospel-truth may be thus abused : for this is none of that number ; but a Principle that gives offence to the godly , and encouragement to the ungodly. And so much as to the rise and occasion of *Antinomian Errors*.

## II.

In the next place, let us view some of the chief Doctrines commonly called *Antinomian*, amongst which there will be found a *πρώτον Ἰσθδθ*, the radical and most prolific Error, from which most of the rest are spawned and procreated.

## Error I.

I shall begin with the dangerous mistake of the *Antinomians* in the Doctrine of *Justification*. The Article of Justification is deservedly stiled by our Divines, *Articulus stantis, vel cadentis Religionis*, the very Pillar of the Christian Religion.

In two things however I must do the *Antinomians* right. (1.) In acknowledging, that though their Errors about Justification be great and dangerous, yet they are not so much about the *substance*,  
as

as about the *mode* of a Sinner's Justification: An Error far inferior to the Error of the *Papists*, who depress the Righteousness of Christ, and exalt their own inherent Righteousness in the business of Justification. (2.) I am bound in charity to believe, that some among them do hold those Errors but speculatively, whilst the Truth lies nearer their hearts, and will not suffer them to reduce their own Opinions into practice. Now as to their Errors about Justification, the most that I have read do make *Justification to* Error I.  
*be an immanent and eternal act of God; and do affirm, the Elect were justified before themselves, or the World, had a being.* Others come lower, and affirm, *the Elect were justified at the time of Christ's death.* With these Dr. Crisp harmonizes.

## Error II.

That Justification by Faith is no more but a manifestation to us of what was really done before we had a being. Hence Mr. Saltmarsh thus defines Faith. *It is* (saith he) *a being perswaded more or less of Christ's love to us; so that when we believe, that which was hid before, doth then appear. God* (saith another) *cannot charge one sin upon that man, who be-*  
*lieves*

*lieves this truth, That God laid his Iniquities upon Christ.*

### Error III.

That men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or question, Whether they believe or no. Nay, That we ought no more to question our Faith, than to question Christ. *Salm. Of Free-grace*, p. 92, 95.

### Error IV.

That Believers are not bound to confess Sin, mourn for it, or pray for the forgiveness of it: because it was pardoned before it was committed; and pardoned Sin is no Sin. *See Eaton's Honey-comb*, p. 446, 447.

### Error V.

They say, that God sees no Sin in Believers, whatsoever Sins they commit. Some of them, as Mr. *Town*, and Mr. *Eaton*, speak out, and tell us, That God can see no Adultery, no Lying, no Blasphemy, no Cozening in Believers: For though Believers do fall into such Enormities; yet all their Sins being pardoned from Eternity, they are no Sins in them. *Town's Assertions*, 96, 97, 98. *Eaton's Honey-comb*, chap. 7. p. 136, 137.

137. with others of a more pious Character than they.

*Error VI.*

That God is not angry with the Elect, nor doth he smite them for their Sins; and to say that he doth so, is an injurious Reflection upon the Justice of God. This is avouched, generally in all their Writings.

*Error VII.*

They tell us, That by God's laying our Iniquities upon Christ, he became as compleatly sinful as we, and we as compleatly righteous as Christ. *Vide Dr. Crisp, p. 270.*

*Error VIII.*

Upon the same ground it is that they affirm, That Believers need not fear either their own Sins, or the Sins of others; for that neither their own, nor any other mens Sins, can do them any hurt, nor must they do any duty for their own Salvation.

*Error IX.*

They will not allow the New Covenant to be made properly with us, but  
X with



with Christ for us; and that this Covenant is all of it a Promise, having no Condition on our part. They do not absolutely deny that Faith, Repentance and Obedience, are Conditions in the New Covenant; but say, They are not Conditions on our part, but Christ's; and that he repented, believed, and obeyed, for us. *Saltmarsh*, of Free-grace, p. 126, 127.

*Error X.*

They speak very slightly of trying our selves by marks and signs of Grace. *Saltmarsh* often calls it a weak, low, carnal way; but the *New-England Antinomians*, or *Libertines*, call it a fundamental Error, to make Sanctification an evidence of Justification; that it is to light a Candle to the Sun; that it darkens our Justification; and that the darker our Sanctification is, the brighter our Justification is. *See their Book, entitled, Rise, Reign. Error 72.*

In this Breviate, or summary Account of *Antinomian* Doctrines, I have only singled out, and touched some of their principal Mistakes and Errors, into which some of them run much farther than

than others. But I look upon such Doctrines to be in themselves of a very dangerous nature, and the malignity and contagion would certainly spread much farther into the World than it doth, had not God provided two powerful Antidotes to resist the malignity.

- Viz.* { 1. The scope and current of Scripture.  
2. The experience and practice of the Saints.

(1.) These Doctrines run cross to the scope and current of the Scriptures; which constantly speak of all unregenerate Persons (without exception of the very Elect themselves, during that state) as Children of wrath, even as others, without Christ, and under condemnation.

They frequently discover God's Anger, and tell us his castigatory Rods of affliction are laid upon them for their Sins.

They represent Sin as the greatest Evil; most opposite to the Glory of God; and good of the Saints; and are therefore filled with Cautions and Threatnings to prevent their sinning.

They call the Saints frequently and earnestly, not only to mourn for their Sins before the Lord; but to pray for the pardon or remission of them in the blood of Christ.

They give us a far different account of saving Faith, and do not place it in a persuasion more or less of Christ's love to us, or a manifestation in our Consciences of the actual remission of our Sins before we had a being; but in our receiving Christ as the Gospel offers him, for righteousness and life.

They frequently call the People of God to the examination and trial of their Interest in Christ by marks and signs; and accordingly furnish them with variety of such marks from the divers parts or branches of Sanctification in themselves.

They earnestly, and every-where, press Believers to strictness and constancy in the duties of Religion, as the way wherein God would have them to walk. They infer Duties from Privileges; and therefore the *Antinomian* Dialect is a wild note, which the generality of serious Christians do easily distinguish from the Scripture-style and Language.

(2.) The Experience and Practice of the Saints recorded in Scripture, as well as our Contemporaries, or those whose Lives are recorded for our imitation, do greatly secure us from the spreading malignity of *Antinomianism*. converse with the living, or read the Histories of dead Saints, and you shall find, That in their Addresses to God, they still bless and praise him for that great and wonderful change of state which was made upon them when they first believed in Christ, and on their believing passed from death to life; freely acknowledging before God, they were before their conversion equal in sin and misery with the vilest Wretches in the World: They heartily mourn for their daily Sins; fear nothing more than Sin; no Afflictions in the World go so near their heart as Sin doth. They mourn for the hardness of their hearts, that they can mourn no more for Sin. They acknowledge the Rods of God that are upon them, are not only the evidences of his displeasure against them for their Sins; but the fruits of their uneven walking with him. And that the greatest of their Afflictions is less than the least of their Iniquities deserve. They fall at their Father's feet

as oft as they fall into sin, humbly and earnestly suing for pardon through the Blood of Christ. They are not only sensible that God sees Sin in them ; but that he seeth such, and so great evils in them, as makes them admire at his patience that they are not consumed in their Iniquities. They find cause enough to suspect their own sincerity : doubt the truth of their Faith, and of their Graces : and are therefore frequent and serious in the trial and examination of their own states by Scripture-marks and signs. They urge the Commands and Threatnings, as well as the Promises, upon their own hearts, to promote Sanctification. Excite themselves to duty and watchfulness against Sin. They also encourage themselves by the rewards of obedience, knowing their labour is not in vain in the Lord. And all this while they look not for that in themselves, which is only to be found in Christ : nor for that in the Law, which is only to be found in the Gospel : nor for that on Earth, which is only to be found in Heaven. This is the way that they take. And he that shall tell them, their Sins can do them no hurt, or their Duties do them no good, speaks to them, not only as a *Bar-*  
*barian,*

*barian*, in a Language they understand not, but in such a Language as their Souls detest and abhor.

Moreover, The zeal and love of Christ, and his Glory, being kindled in their Souls, they have not patience to hear such Doctrines as so greatly derogate from his Glory, under a pretence of honouring and exalting him. It wounds and grieves their very hearts to see the World hardned in their prejudices against Reformation, and a gap opened to all licentiousness.

But notwithstanding this double Antidote and Security, we find by daily experience such Doctrines too much obtaining in the professing World. For my own part, He that searches my Heart and Reins is witness, I would rather chuse to have my right hand wither, and my tongue rot within my mouth, than to speak one word, or write one line to cloud or diminish the Free-grace of God. Let it arise and shine in its Meridian Glory. None owes more to it, or expects more from it, than I do. And what I shall write in this Controversy, is to vindicate it from those Doctrines and Opinions, which under pretence of exalting it, do really militate against it. To

begin therefore with the first and leading Error.

### Error I.

*That the Justification of Sinners is an immanent and eternal act of God, not only preceding all acts of sin; but the very existence of the sinner himself, and so perfectly abolishing sin in our persons, that we are as clean from sin as Christ himself, ἀναμάρτητοι, as some of them have spoken. To stop the progress of this Error, I shall,*

1. Lay down the Sentence of the Orthodox about it.
2. Offer some Reasons for the refutation of it.

(1.) That which I take to be the truth agreed upon, and asserted by sound reformed Divines touching Gospel-Justification, is by them made clear to the World in these following Scriptural distinctions of it.

Justification may be considered under a twofold respect or habitude.

1. According to God's Eternal Decree. Or,
2. According to the execution thereof in time.

(1.) Ac-

(1.) According to God's Eternal Decree and Purpose; and in this respect Grace is said to be given us in Christ before the World began, *2 Tim.* 1. 9. And we are said to be predestinated to the adoption of Children by Jesus Christ, *Eph.* 1. 5.

(2.) According to the execution thereof in time; So they again distinguish it, by considering it two ways:

1. In its Impetration by Christ.
2. In its Application to us.

That very mercy or privilege of Justification, which God from all Eternity, purely out of his benevolent Love, purposed and decreed for his Elect, was also in time purchased for them by the death of Christ, *Rom.* 5. 9, 10. where we are said to be justified by his Blood; and he is said to have made peace through the Blood of his Cross, to reconcile all things to himself, *Col.* 1. 20. to be delivered for our Offences, and raised again for our Justification, *Rom.* 4. 25. Once more, *That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses*, *2 Cor.* 5. 19. God the Father had in the death of Christ a foundation of reconciliation, whereby he became  
pro-



propitious to his Elect, that he might absolve and justify them. Again,

(2.) It must be considered in its application to us, which application is made in this Life at the time of our effectual Calling. When an elect Sinner is united to Christ by Faith, and so passeth from Death to Life, from a state of Condemnation, into a state of Absolution and Favour ; this is our actual Justification, *Rom. 5. 1. Acts 13. 39. John 5. 24.* which actual Justification is again considered two ways:

1. Universally, and in General, as to the State of the Person.
2. Specially, and Particularly, as to the Acts of Sin.

As soon as we are received into Communion with Christ, and his Righteousness is imputed by God, and received by Faith, immediately we pass from a state of Death and Condemnation, to a state of Life and Justification, and all Sins already committed, are remitted without Exception or Revocation ; and not only so, but a Remedy is given us in the Righteousness of Christ against Sins to come ; and tho these special and particular Sins we afterward fall into, do need  
par-

particular Pardons; yet, by renewed Acts of Faith and Repentance, the Believer applies to himself the Righteousness of Christ, and they are pardoned

Again, they carefully distinguish betwixt.

1. It's Application by God to our Persons. And
2. It's Declaration or Manifestation in us; and to us.

Which Manifestation or Declaration, is either,

1. Private in the Conscience of a Believer. Or,
2. Publick, at the Bar of Judgment.

And thus Justification is many ways distinguished. And notwithstanding all this, it is still *actus indivisus*, an undivided act; not on our part, for it is iterated in many acts; but on God's part, who at once decreed it; and on Christ's part, who by one Offering purchased it, and at the time of our Vocation universally applied it, as to the state of the Person justified; and that so effectually, as no future Sin shall bring that Person any more under Condemnation.

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In this Sentence or Judgment, the Generality of Reformed Orthodox Divines are agreed; and the want of distinguishing, (as they according to Scripture have distinguished) hath led the *Antinomians* into this first Error about Justification, and that Error hath led them into most of the other Errors. That this Doctrine of theirs, (which teaches that Men are justified actually and completely, before they have a being) is an Error, and hath no solid Foundation to support it, may be evidenced by these three Reasons.

1. Because it is Irrational.
2. Because it is Unscriptural.
3. Because it is Injurious to Christ, and the Souls of Men.

*Reas. 1.* It is Irrational to imagine that Men are actually justified, before they have a Being, by an immanent Act or Decree of God. Many things have been urged upon this account to confute and destroy this Fancy, and much more may be rationally urged against it. Let the following Particulars be weighed in the Balance of Reason.

1. Can we rationally suppose, that Pardon and Acceptance can be affirmed,  
or

or predicated of that which is not? Reason tells us, *Non entis nulla sunt accidentia*; That which is not, can neither be condemned nor justified: But before the Creation, or before a Man's particular Conception, he was not, and therefore could not in his own Person be the Subject of Justification. Where there is no Law, there is no Sin: Where there is no Sin, there is no Punishment: Where there is neither Sin nor Punishment, there can be no Guilt (for Guilt is an Obligation to Punishment). And where there's neither Law, nor Sin, nor Obligation to Punishment, there can be no Justification. He that is not capable of a Charge, is not capable of a Discharge. What remains then, but that either the Elect must exist from Eternity, or be justified in time? 'Tis true, future Beings may be considered, as in the purpose and decree of God from Eternity; or as in the Intention of Christ, who died intentionally for the Sins of the Elect, and rose again for their Justification. But neither the Decree of God, nor the Death of Christ, takes place upon any Man for his actual Justification, until he personally exist. For the Object of Justification is a Sinner actually ungodly,

godly, *Rom.* 4. 5. but so no Man is, or can be from Eternity. In Election, men are considered without respect to Good or Evil done by them, *Rom.* 9. 11. not so in actual Justification.

2. In Justification there is a Change made upon the state of the Person, *Rom.* 5. 8, 9. *1 Cor.* 6. 9, 10, 11. By Justification men pass from a state of Death to a state of Life, *Joh.* 5. 24. But the Decree or Purpose of God in it self makes no such actual change upon the state of any person. It hath indeed the nature of an Universal Cause ; but an Universal Cause produceth nothing without particulars. If our state be changed, it is not by an immanent act of God : Hence no such thing doth *transire*. A mere *velle non punire*, or intention to justify us in due time and order, makes no change on our state, till that time come, and the particular Causes have wrought. A Prince may have a purpose or intention to pardon a Law-condemned *Traitor*, and free him from that Condemnation in due time ; but whilst the Law that condemned him stands in its full force and power against him, he is not justified or acquitted, notwithstanding that gracious intention, but stands still condemned. So is it with  
us,

us, till by Faith we are implanted into Christ. 'Tis true, Christ is a surety for all his, and hath satisfied the debt. He is a common Head to all his, as *Adam* was to all his Children, *Rom. 5. 19.* But as the Sin of *Adam* condemns none, but those that are in him; so the Righteousness of Christ actually justifies none but those that are in him; and none are actually in him, but Believers. Therefore till we believe, no actual change passeth, or can pass upon our state. So that this *Hypothesis* is contrary to Reason.

As this Opinion is Irrational, so it is *Reas. 2.* Unscriptural. For (1.) The Scripture frequently speaks of Remission or Justification as a future act, and therefore not from Eternity, *Rom. 4. 23, 24.* Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him, &c. And *Gal. 3. 8.* The Scriptures foreseeing that God would justify the Heathen through faith, preached before the Gospel unto Abraham. The Gospel was preached many years before the Gentiles were justified: but if they were justified from Eternity, how was the Gospel preached before their Justification?

(2.) The

(2.) The Scripture leaves all Unbelievers, without distinction, under condemnation and wrath. The Curse of the Law lies upon them till they believe, *John 3. 18. He that believeth on him, is not condemned; but he that believeth not, is condemned already.* And *Eph. 2. 3, 12, 13.* The very Elect themselves were by nature the Children of wrath even as others. They were at that time, or during that state of nature (which takes in all that whole space betwixt their conception and conversion) without Christ, without hope, without God in the World. But if this Opinion be true, that the Elect were justified from Eternity, or from the time of Christ's death; then it cannot be true, that the Elect by nature are Children of Wrath, without Christ, without Hope, without God in the World; except these two may consist together (which is absolutely impossible) that Children of Wrath, without God, Christ, or Hope, are actually discharged from their Sins and Dangers by a free and gracious act of Justification.

*Object.*

But doth not the Scripture say, *Rom. 8. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect?* If none can charge the Elect, then God hath discharged them.

God

God hath not actually discharged *Sol.* them as they are Elect, but as they are justified Elect : for so runs that Text, and clears it self in the very next words, *It is God that justifieth.* When God hath actually justified an Elect Person, none can charge him.

(3.) 'Tis cross to the Scripture-order of Justification ; which places it not only after Christ's death in the place last cited, *Rom. 8. 33.* but also after our actual vocation, as is plain, *vers. 30.* Moreover, *whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Is it absurd to place Vocation before Predestination, or Glorification before Justification ? sure then it must be absurd also to place Justification before Vocation : the one as well as the other confounds and breaks the Scripture-order. You may as well say, men shall be glorified, that were never justified ; as say they may be justified, before they believed or existed. So that you see the notion of Justification from Eternity, or before our actual existence, and effectual Vocation, is a notion as repugnant to sacred Scripture, as it is to sound Reason.



*Reas. 3.* And as it is found repugnant to Reason and Scripture, so it is highly injurious to Jesus Christ, and the Souls of Men.

(1.) It greatly injures the Lord Jesus Christ, and robs him of the glory of being our Saviour. For if the Elect be justified from Eternity, Christ cannot be the Saviour of the Elect, as most assuredly he is: for if Christ save them, he must save them as persons subject to perishing, either *de facto*, or *de jure*. But if the Elect were justified from Eternity, they could in neither respect be subject to perishing: for he that was eternally justified, was never condemned, nor capable of condemnation; and he that never was, or could be condemned, could never be subject to perishing; and he that never was, nor could be subject to perishing, can never truly and properly be said to be saved.

If it be said, the Elect were not justified till the death of Christ: I demand then what became of all them that died before the death of Christ? If they were not justified, they could not be glorified: for this is sure from *Rom. 8. 30.* That the whole number of the glorified in Heaven is made up of such as were justified

fied on Earth : Let men take heed therefore, lest under pretence of exalting Christ, they bereave him of the glory of being the Saviour of his Elect.

(2.) It bereaves him of another glorious Royalty. The Scripture everywhere makes our Justification the result and fruit of the meritorious death of Christ, *Rom. 3. 24, 25. Rom. 8. 3, 4. 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20. Gal. 3. 13, 14. Eph. 1. 7.* But if men were justified from Eternity, how is their Justification the fruit and result of the blood of the Cross? as it plainly appears from these Scriptures to be. Nay,

(3.) This Opinion leaves no place for the satisfaction of Justice by the Blood of Christ for our Sins. He did not die, according to this Opinion, to pay our debts. And here *Antinomianism* and *Socinianism* meet, and congratulate each other. For if there were no debts owing to the Justice of God from Eternity, Christ could not die to pay them: and 'tis manifest there were no debts due to God's Justice from Eternity on the account of his Elect, if the Elect were from Eternity justified; unless you will say, a person may be justified, and yet his debts not paid: for all Justifica-

tion dissolves the obligation to punishment.

If there were any debts for Christ to pay by his Blood, they must either be his own debts, or the Elect's. To say they were his own, is a blasphemous reproach to him : and according to this Opinion we cannot say they were the Elect's; for if they were justified from Eternity, their debts were discharged, and their bonds cancell'd from Eternity. So that this Opinion leaves nothing to the Blood of Christ to discharge or make satisfaction for.

(2.) And as it hath been proved to be highly injurious to the Lord Jesus, so it is greatly injurious to the Souls of men, as it naturally leads them into all those wild and licentious Opinions which naturally flow from it, as from the radical prolifque Error, whence most of the rest derive themselves, as will immediately appear in the

## II. Error.

*That Justification by Faith is no more but the manifestation to us of what was really and actually done before. Or a being persuaded more or less of Christ's love to us. And that when persons do believe, that*

*that which was hid before, doth then only appear to them.*

*Refutation.*

As the former Error dangerously corrupts the Doctrine of Justification, so this corrupts the Doctrine of Faith; and therefore deserves to be exploded by all Christians.

That there is a manifestation and discovery of the special love of God, and our own saving concernment in the death of Christ to some Christians at some times, cannot be denied. *St. Paul* could say, *Gal. 2. 20, 21.* Christ loved him, and gave himself for him: but to say that this is the justifying act of Faith, whereby a Sinner passeth from condemnation and death, into the state of righteousness and life; this I must look upon as a great Error, and that for these following Reasons.

*Reason I.*

Because there be multitudes of believing and justified Persons in the World, who have no such manifestation, evidence, or assurance, that God laid their Iniquities upon Christ, and that he died to put away their Sins; but daily con-

flit with strong fears and doubts, whether it be so or no. There are but few among Believers that attain such a persuasion and manifestation, as *Antinomians* make to be all that is meant in Scripture by Justification through Faith. Many thousand new-born Christians live as the new-born Babe, which neither knows its own Estate, or Inheritance, to which it is born,

*Vivit, & est vita nescius ipse sua.*

A Soul may be in Christ, and a justified state, without any such persuasion or manifestation, as they here speak of, *Isa. 50. 10.* And if any shall assert the contrary, he will condemn the greatest part of the Generation of God's Children. Now that cannot be the saving and justifying act of Faith, which is not to be found in multitudes of believing and justified Persons.

But manifestation, or a personal persuasion of the love of God to a Man's Soul, or that Christ died for him, and all his Iniquities are thereby forgiven him, is not to be found in multitudes of believing and justified Souls.

Therefore such a persuasion or manifestation is not that saving, justifying

ing Faith, which the Scripture speaks of.

That Faith which only justifies the person of a Sinner before God, must necessarily be found in all justified Believers, or else a man may be justified without the least degree of justifying Faith, and consequently it is not Faith alone, by which a man is justified before God.

### Reason II.

That cannot be the justifying act of Faith, which is not constant and abiding with the justified Person, but comes and goes, is frequently lost and recovered, the state of the Person still remaining the same. And such contingent things are these persuasions and manifestations; they come and go, are won and lost, the state of the Person still remaining the same. *Job* was as much a justified Believer when he complained that God was his Enemy, as when he could say, *I know that my Redeemer liveth*. The same may be said of *David*, *Heman*, *Asaph*, and the greatest number of justified Believers recorded in Scripture. There be two things belonging to a justified state. (1.) That which is essential and inseparable, to wit, Faith uniting the

Soul to Christ. ( 2. ) That which is contingent and separable, to wit, evidence and persuation of our interest in him. Those Believers that walk in darkness, and have no light, have yet a real special interest in God as their God, *Isa.* 50. 10. Here then you find Believers without persuation or manifestation of God's love to them ; which could never be, if justifying Faith consisted in a personal persuation, manifestation or evidence of the love of God, and pardon of Sin to a Man's Soul. That cannot be the justifying Faith spoken of in Scripture, which a justified Person may live in Christ without, and be as much in a state of pardon and acceptation with God, when he wants it, as when he hath it. But such is persuation, evidence, or manifestation of a man's particular interest in the love of God, or the pardon of his Sins. Therefore this is not the justifying Faith the Scripture speaks of.

*Reason III.*

That only is justifying, saving Faith, which gives the Soul Right and Title to Christ, and the saving benefits which  
come

come by Christ upon all the Children of God. Now it is not persuasion that Christ is ours, but acceptance of him, that gives us interest in Christ, and the saving benefits and privileges of the Children of God, *John 1. 12. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God; even to them that believe on his name.* So that unless the *Antinomians* can prove, that receiving of Christ, and personal persuasion of pardon, be one and the same thing; and consequently, that all Believers in the World are persuaded or assured that their sins are pardoned; and reject from the number of Believers all tempted, deserted, dark, and doubting Christians; this persuasion they speak of, is not; nor can it be the act of Faith, which justifies the person of a Sinner before God. That which I think led our *Antinomians* into this Error, was an unsound and unwary definition of Faith, which in their youth they had imbibed from their *Catechisms*, and other *Systems*, passing without contradiction or scruple in those days, which though it were a mistake, and hath abundantly been proved to be so in latter days; yet our *Antinomians* will not part with a notion so serviceable to the support



port of their darling Opinion of Eternal Justification.

*Reason IV.*

A Man may be strongly persuaded of the Love of God to his Soul, and of the pardon of his Sin, and yet have no interest in Christ, nor be in a pardoned State. This was the Case of the *Pharisees* and others, *Luke 18. 9. Rev. 3. 17.* Therefore this persuasion cannot be justifying Faith. If a persuasion be that that justifies the persuaded person, then the *Pharisees* and the *Laodiceans* were justified. Oh! How common and easie is it for the worst of Men to be strongly persuaded of their good condition; whilst humble serious Christians doubt and stagger? I know not what such Doctrine as this is useful for, but to beget and strengthen that sin of presumption, which sends down multitudes to Hell, out of the professing World: For what is more common amongst the most carnal and un sanctified part of the World, not only such as are meerly moral, but even the most flagitious and prophane, than to support themselves by false persuasions of their good estate? When they are asked, in order to their conviction,

viction, what hopes of Salvation they have, and how they are founded? Their common answer is, Christ died for Sinners, and that they are persuaded, that whatever he hath done for any other, he hath done it for them, as well as others: But such a persuasion cometh not of him that called them, and is of dangerous consequence.

## Reason V.

This Doctrine is certainly unsound, because it confounds the distinction betwixt Dogmatical, and Saving Faith; and makes it all one, to believe an *Axiom*, or Proposition, and to believe savingly in Christ to Eternal Life. What is it to believe, that God lay'd our iniquities upon Christ, more than the mere assent of the understanding to a Scripture *Axiom* or Proposition, without any consent of the will to receive Jesus Christ as the Gospel offers him? And this is no more than what any unregenerated person may do; yea, the very Devils themselves assent to the truth of Scripture Axioms and Propositions, as well as Men, *Jam. 2. 19. Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well: the Devils also believe and tremble.* What is this more than a Scripture-Axiom

om or Proposition, *God lay'd the iniquity of us all upon Christ*, Isa. 53. 6? And yet (saith Dr. Crisp, p. 296.) God cannot charge one Sin upon that Man that believes this Truth, *That God lay'd his iniquities upon Christ*. The assent of the understanding may be, and often is given to a Scripture Proposition, whil'st the Heart and Will remain carnal, and utterly averse to Jesus Christ. I may believe Dogmatically, that the iniquities of Men were lay'd upon Christ, and persuade my self presumptively, that mine, as well as other Mens, were lay'd upon him, and yet remain a perfect Stranger to all saving Union and Communion with him.

*Reason VI.*

This Opinion cannot be true, because it takes away the only support that bears up the Soul of a Believer in times of temptation and desertion.

For how will you comfort such a distressed Soul that saith, and saith truly, I have no persuasion that Christ is mine, or that my sins are pardoned; but I am heartily willing to cast my poor sin-burthened Soul upon him, that he may be mine; I do not certainly know that he  
died

died intentionally for me, but I lye at his feet, cleave to him, wait at the door of hope; I stay and trust upon him, though I walk in darkness, and have no light. Now let such Doctrine as this be Preached to a Soul in this condition, (and we may be sure 'tis the condition of many thousands belonging to Christ) I say, bring this Doctrine to them, and tell them, That unless they be persuaded of the Love of God, and that God lay'd their iniquities on Christ, except they have some manifestation that their persons were justified from eternity, their accepting of Christ, consent of their Wills, waiting at his Feet, &c. signifies nothing; if they believe not that their particular sins were lay'd upon Christ, and are pardoned to them by him, they are still unbelievers, and have no part or portion in him. Whatever pretences of spiritual comfort and relief the *Antinomian* Doctrine makes, you see by this, it really deprives a very great, if not the greatest number of God's people of their best and sweetest relief in days of darkness and spiritual distress. So that this Doctrine, which makes manifestation and assurance the very essence of justifying faith, appears hereby to be both a  
false

false and very dangerous Doctrine. And yet there is as much or more danger to the Souls of Men in their

### III. Error.

*That Men ought not to doubt of their Faith, or question whether they believe or no. Nay, That they ought no more to question their Faith, than to question Christ.*

### *Refutation.*

What an easie way to Heaven is the *Antinomian* way? Were it but as true and safe to the Soul, as it is easie and pleasing to the Flesh, who would not embrace it? What a charm of the Devil is prepared in these two Propositions? Be but perswaded more or less of Christ's Love to thy Soul (saith Mr. *Saltmarsh*) and that's justifying Faith. Here's a snare of the Devil lay'd for the Souls of Men. And then (2.) to make it fast and sure upon the Soul, and effectually to prevent the discovery of their Error, tell them they need no more to doubt or question their Faith, than to question Christ, and the work is done to all intents.

Now that this is an Error, and a very dangerous one, will appear by the following Reasons.

*Reason*

## Reason I.

The questioning and examining of our Faith, is a commanded Scripture-duty, 2 Cor. 13. 5. *Examine your selves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves, &c.* And 2 Pet. 1. 10. *Give diligence to make your calling and election sure. Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall,* 1 Cor. 10. 12. *The second Epistle of John, verse 8. Look to your selves, that we lose not the things which we have wrought :* With multitude of other Scriptures, recommending holy jealousy, serious self-trial and examination of our Faith, as the unquestionable duties of the people of God. But if we ought to question our Faith no more than we ought to question Christ, away then with all self-examination, and diligence to make our Calling and Election sure; for where there is no doubt nor danger, there's no place nor room for examination, or further endeavours to make it surer than it is. How do you like this Doctrine, Christians? How many be there among you, that find no more cause to question your own faith or interest in Christ, than you do to question whether there be a Christ, or whether

ther he shed his Blood for the remission of any Man's sins.

*Reason II.*

This is a very dangerous Error, and it is the more dangerous, because it leaves no way to recover a presumptuous Sinner out of his dangerous mistakes; but confirms and fixes him in them, to the great hazard of his eternal ruin. It cuts off all means of conviction or better information, and Nails them fast to the carnal state in which they are. According to this Doctrine 'tis impossible for a Man to think himself something, when he is nothing; or to be guilty of such a Paralogism and cheat, put by himself upon his own Soul, *Jam. 1. 22.* this in effect bids a Man keep on right or wrong; he is sure enough of Heaven, if he be but strongly persuaded that Christ died for him, and he shall come thither at last. Certainly this was not the Counsel Christ gave to the self-deceived *Laodiceans, Rev. 3. 17, 18.* but instead of dissuading them from self-jealousy and suspicion of their condition, whether their Faith and State were safe or not, he rather counsels them to buy Eye-salve, that is, to labour after better information of  
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the true state and condition they were in, and not cast away their Souls by false persuasions and vain confidences.

*Reason III.*

This Doctrine cannot be true, because it supposes every persuasion, or strong conceit of a Man's own heart, to be as infallibly sure and certain, as the very fundamental Doctrine of Christianity. No truth in the World can be surer than this, That Jesus Christ died for Sinners. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, 1 Tim. i. 15.* This is a Foundation stone, a tried, precious Corner-stone, a sure foundation lay'd by God himself, *Isa. 28. 16.* and shall the strong conceits and confidences of Men's hearts vye and compare in point of certainty with it? As well may probable and meerly conjectural Propositions compare with Axioms that are self-evident, or demonstrative Arguments, that leave no doubts behind them. Know we not, that the heart is deceitful above all things, the most notorious cheat and impostor in the World, *Jer. 17. 9?* Does it not deceive all the formal hypocrites in the World in this very point? And shall every strong conceit and presumptuous confidence,



dence, begotten by Satan upon a deceitful heart, and nursed up by self-love, pass without any examination or suspicion for as infallible and assured a truth, as that Jesus Christ came into the World to save sinners? The Lord sweep that Doctrine out of the World by Reformation, which is like to sweep so many Thousand Souls into Hell by a remediless Self-deception.

#### *Error IV.*

The fourth *Antinomian* Error before mentioned, was this, *That Believers are not bound to confess their sins, or pray for the pardon of them; because their sins were pardoned before they were committed; and pardoned sin is no sin.*

#### *Refutation.*

If this be true Doctrine, then it will justify and make good such Conclusions and Inferences as these which necessarily flow from it: *viz.*

1. That there is no Sin in Believers.
2. Or if there be, the evil is very inconsiderable. Or,
3. Whatever evil is in it, it is not the will of God that they should either confess it, mourn over it,

or

or pray for the remission of it :  
 Whatever he requires of others,  
 yet they need take no notice of  
 it, so as to afflict their hearts for  
 it ; God hath exempted them  
 from such concernments : There's  
 nothing but joy to a Believer,  
 saith Mr. *Eaton*. But neither of  
 these conclusions are either true  
 or tolerable ; therefore neither is  
 the principle so which yields  
 them.

(1.) It is not true or tolerable to affirm,  
 that there is no Sin in a Believer, 1 *Joh.*  
 1. 8. *If we say that we have no sin, we*  
*deceive our selves, and the truth is not in*  
*us. There's not a just Man upon earth,*  
*that doeth good and sinneth not,* Eccles. 7. 20.  
*In many things we offend all,* James 3. 2.  
 The Scriptures plainly affirm it, and the  
 universal experience of all the Saints sad-  
 ly confirms it. 'Tis true, the Blood of  
 Christ hath taken away the guilt of Sin,  
 so that it shall not condemn Believers ;  
 and the spirit of Sanctification hath ta-  
 ken away the dominion of Sin, so that  
 it doth not reign over Believers ; but no-  
 thing, except Glorification, utterly de-  
 stroy's the existence of Sin in Believers.  
 The acts of sin are our acts, and not  
 Z z Christ's,

Christ's, and the stain and pollution of those sinful acts, are the burthens and infelicities of Believers, even in their justified State. Dr. *Criſp* indeed, p. 270, 271. calls that objection ( I suppose he means distinction betwixt the guilt of Sin and Sin it self ) a simple objection, and tells us, the very Sin it self, as well as the guilt of it, passed off from us, and was lay'd upon Christ: So that speaking of the Sins of Blasphemy, Murther, Theft, Adultery, Lying, &c. From that time (saith he) that they were lay'd upon Christ, thou ceaseſt to be a transgressor. If thou haſt part in the Lord Christ, all these transgressions of thine become actually the transgressions of Christ. So that now thou art not an Idolater, or Persecutor, a Thief, a Murtherer, and an Adulterer, thou art not a sinful person; Christ is made that very sinfulness before God, &c. Such expressions justly offend and grieve the hearts of Christians, and expose Christianity to scorn and contempt. Was it not enough that the guilt of our sin was lay'd on him, but we must imagine also, that the thing it self, Sin, with all the deformity and pollution should be essentially transferred from us to Christ? No, no. After we are justified, sin dwelleth  
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in us, *Rom.* 7. 17. warreth in us, and brings us into captivity, *ver.* 23. Burthens and oppresseth our very Souls, *v.* 24. Methinks I need not stand to prove what I should think no sound experienced Christian dares to deny, that there is much sin still remaining in the persons of the justified. He that dares to deny it, hath little acquaintance with the nature of Sin, and of his own Heart.

(2.) It is neither true nor tolerable to say there is no considerable evil in the sins of Believers, deserving a mournful confession or petition for pardon. The desert of Sin is Hell; 'tis an artifice of Satan to draw men to Sin by persuading them there is no great evil in it; but none except Fools will believe it. Fools, indeed, make a mock of Sin; but all that understand either the intrinsic evil of it, or the sad and dismal effects produced by it, are far from thinking it a light or inconsiderable evil. The sins even of Believers greatly wrong and offend their God, *Psal.* 51. 4. and is that a light thing with us? They interrupt and clog our Communion with God, *Rom.* 7. 21. They grieve the good Spirit of God, *Ephes.* 4. 30. Certainly these are no inconsiderable mischiefs.

(3.) Now if there be sin in Believers, and so much evil in their sins (neither of which any sober Christian will deny) then undoubtedly it is their duty to confess it freely, mourn for it bitterly, and pray for the pardon of it earnestly, unless God have any where discharged them from those Duties, and told them these are none of their concernments, and that he expects not these things from justified persons; but that these are Duties properly and only belonging to other Men. But on the contrary, you find the whole current of Scripture running strongly and constantly in direct opposition to such idle and sinful notions. For first,

(1.) He hath plainly declared it to be his will, that his people should confess their sins before him, and strongly connected their Confessions with their Pardons, 1 *John* 5. 9. and frequently suspends from them the comfortable sense of forgiveness, till their Hearts be brought to this duty, *Psal.* 32. 5. compared with *vers.* 3. 4. the more to engage them to this duty by the sensible ease and comfort attending and following it.

(2.) He also enjoyns it upon them, That they mourn for their Sins, *Isa.* 22. 12. expresses his great delight in contrition

trition and brokenness of spirit for sin, *Isa. 66. 2. To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit.* Christ himself pronounces a blessing upon them that mourn, *Matt. 5. 4.* Justified *Paul* mournfully confesses his former blasphemies, persecutions and injuries done against Christ, *1 Tim. 1. 13.* So did *Ezra*, *Daniel*, and other eximious Saints.

Yes, say some, they did indeed confess their sins committed before their justification, but not their after-sins. *Object.*

According to *Antinomian* Principles, I would demand, If all the Elect were justified from Eternity, what sins any of them could confess which they had committed before their Justification? Or if they were justified from the time of Christ's death, what were the Sins any of us have to confess who had not a being, and therefore had not actually sinned long after the death of Christ? But I hope none will deny that the mournful complaints the Apostle makes for Sin, *Rom. 7. 23, 24.* were after he was a sanctified and justified person. *Reply.*

( 3. ) It is not the Will of Christ to exempt any justified person upon Earth, from the Duty of Praying frequently and

fervently for the remission of his sins, This the most eminent Saints upon Earth have done. The greatest favourites of Heaven have freely confessed and heartily prayed for the remission of sin, *Dan. 9. 4, 19.* And that the Gospel gives us no exemption from this Duty, appears by Christ's injunction of it upon all his people, *Matt. 6. 12.*

#### Error V.

To give countenance to the former Error, they say, *That God sees no sin in Believers, whatsoever sins they commit ;* and seek a covert for this Error from *Numb. 23. 21.* and *Jer. 50. 20.* In the former place it is said by *Balaam*, *He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, nor seen perverseness in Israel.* And in the other place it is said, *In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none ; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found : for I will pardon them, whom I reserve.*

#### Refutation.

Now that this Opinion of our *Antinomians* is Erroneous, will appear four ways.

I. By

1. By its repugnancy to God's Omniscience.
2. By its inconsistency with his Dispensations.
3. By its want of a Scripture-foundation.
4. By its contradictoriness to their other Principles.

'Tis true, and we thankfully acknowledge it, that God sees no Sin in Believers, as a Judge sees Guilt in a Malefactor, to condemn him for it; that's a sure and comfortable truth for us: but to say he sees no Sin in his Children as a displeased Father to correct and chasten them for it, is an Assertion repugnant to Scripture, and very injurious to God. For,

(1.) 'Tis injurious to God's Omniscience, Psal. 139. 2. *Thou (saith holy David) knowest my down-sitting, and my up-rising, and understandest my thoughts afar off, and art acquainted with all my ways.* Job 28. 24. *He looketh to the ends of the Earth, and seeth under the whole Heavens.* Prov. 15. 3. *The Eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.* Psal. 33. 14, 15. *From the place of his habitation he looketh upon all the Inhabitants*



*tants of the Earth; he fashioneth their hearts alike, he considereth all their works.* He that denies that God seeth his most secret Sins, therein consequentially denies him to be God.

(2.) This Assertion is inconsistent with God's Providential Dispensations to his People. When *David*, a justified Believer, had sinned against him in the matter of *Uriah*, it is said, 2 Sam. 11. 27. *The thing that David had done, displeased the Lord*: and as the effect of that displeasure, it's said, Chap. 12. 15. *The Lord struck the Child that Uriah's Wife bare unto David, and it was very sick.* Among the *Corinthians* some that should not be condemned with the World, were judged and chastened of the Lord for their undue approaches to his Table, 1 Cor. 11. 32. Now I would ask the *Antinomian* these two Questions. (1. Qu.) Whether it can be denied, that *David* under the Old Testament, and these *Corinthians* under the New, were justified Persons; and yet the former stricken by God in his Child, with its sickness and death; and the latter in like manner smitten by God in their own persons; and both for their respective sins committed against God; and yet God saw no

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no sin in them? Did God smite them for sin, and yet beheld no sin in them? Beware lest in ascribing such strokes to God, you strike at once both at his Omniscience and Justice. (2. *Qu.*) How God upon Confession and Repentance can be said to put away his People's sins (as *Nathan* there assures *David* he had done) when in the mean time he saw no sin in him, either to chastise him for, or to pardon in him? Do you think that God's Afflictions or Pardons are blind-fold Acts, done at random? how inconsistent is this with Divine Dispensations?

(3.) This Opinion is altogether destitute of a Scripture-foundation: 'tis evident it hath none in the only places alledged for it. It hath no footing at all in *Numb.* 23. 21. Grave and learned *Gataker* hath learnedly and industriously vindicated that Scripture from this abuse of it by *Antinomians*, in his Treatise upon that Text, entitled, *God's Eye upon his Israel*; where after a learned and critical search of the Text, he telleth us, it soundeth word for word thus from the Original: *He hath not beheld wrong against Jacob, nor hath he seen grievance against Israel*: So that the meaning is not, That God did not see sin in *Israel*, but that he beheld

beheld not with approbation the wrongs and injuries done by others against his *Israel*; and shews at large by divers solid Reasons, why the *Antinomian* sense cannot be the proper sense of that place, it being cross to the main tenour of the Story, and truth of God's Word, which shews, that God often complained of their Sins, often threatned to avenge them; yea, did actually avenge them by destroying them in the Wilderness; nay, *Balaam* himself, who uttered these words unto *Balak*, did not so understand them, as appears by the advice he gave to *Balak*, to draw them into sin, that thereby God might be provoked to withdraw his protection from them.

And for *Jer.* 50. 20. it makes nothing to their purpose. Many expound the sin there sought after, and not found, to be the Sin of Idolatry, which *Israel* should be purged from by their Captivity, according to *Isa.* 27. 9. But the generality of sound Expositors are agreed, That by the not finding of *Israel's* and *Judah's* Sin, is meant no more, but his not finding those Bonds or Obligations against them to eternal punishment, which their Sins had put them under.

(4.) In a word, This Opinion clashes with their other Principles. For they say, That though there was pardon and remission under the Old Covenant (which they allowed to be a Covenant of Grace) yet it was but *gradatim* and successively, as they offered Sacrifices. If a man had sinned ignorantly, until he brought a Sacrifice, his sin lay upon him, it may be a week, a months distance between, before they could have their pardon. *Vide Dr. Crisp* of the two Covenants, p. 256, 257. Now I demand, If this were the state and case of all God's *Israel* under the Old Testament, Why do these men affirm that God can see no sin in a Believer? and why do they expound the words of *Balaam* so contradictorily to this their other Opinion? For they will not deny but God sees unpardoned Sins in all; and here is a week, or month, or more time, allowed between the commission and remission of their Sin. And so much of the 5th Antinomian Error.

## Error VI.

*That God is not angry with the Elect, nor doth he smite them for their Sins; and to say that he doth so, is an injurious reflection upon the Justice of God, who hath received*

*received full satisfaction for all their Sins from the hand of Christ.*

There are several Mistakes and Errors in these Assertions; and I suppose our *Antinomians* were led into them, (1.) By their abhorrence of the Popish Doctrine, which errs more dangerously in the other extream: for they wickedly assert our Sufferings to be satisfactory for our Sins, which is the ground of Popish Penances, and voluntary Self-castigations. (2.) From a groundless apprehension, That God's Corrections of us for our Sins, are inconsistent with the fulness of Christ's satisfaction for them. Christ having paid all our Debts, and dissolved our Obligations to all punishment, it cannot consist with the Justice of God to lay any Rod upon us for our Sins after Christ hath born all that our Sins deserved.

This mistake of the end of Christ's death, occasions them to stumble into the other Mistakes: they imagine that Christ's Satisfaction abolished God's hatred of Sin in Believers. But this cannot be; God's antipathy to Sin, can never be taken away by the Satisfaction of Christ, though his hatred to the Persons of the redeemed be: for the hatred of Sin is founded in the unchangeable Nature of God;

God; and he can as soon cease to be holy, as cease to hate Sin, *Hab.* 1. 13. Nor was Christ's death ever designed to this end: though Christ hath satisfied for the Sins of Believers, God still hates Sin in Believers. His hatred to their Sins, and love to their Persons, are not inconsistent. As a man may love his Leg or Arm, as they are Members of his own Body, and notwithstanding that love, hate the Gangrene which hath taken them; and lance or use painful corrosives for the cure of them.

Neither do our *Antinomians* distinguish as they ought, betwixt vindictive Punishments from God, the pure issues and effects of his Justice and Wrath against the Wicked; and his Paternal Castigations, the pure issues of the Care and Love of a displeased Father. Great and manifold are the differences betwixt his vindictive Wrath upon his Enemies, and the rebukes of the Rod upon his Children. Those are Legal, these Evangelical. Those out of wrath and hatred, these out of love. Those unsanctified, but these blessed and sanctified to happy ends and purposes to his People. Those for destruction, these for salvation.

To narrow the matter in Controversy as much as we can, I shall lay down three Concessions about God's Corrections of his People.

*Concession I.*

We chearfully and thankfully acknowledge the perfection and fulness of the satisfaction of Christ for all the Sins of Believers: and with thankfulness do own, that if God should cast all, or any of them, into an ocean of temporal Troubles and Distresses; in all that sea of Sorrow, there would not be found one drop of vindictive Wrath. Christ hath drunk the last drop of that Cup, and left nothing for Believers to suffer by way of satisfaction.

*Concession II.*

We grant also, That all the Sufferings of Believers in this World, are not for their Sins; but some of them are for the prevention of Sin, *2 Cor. 12. 7.* some for the tryal of their Graces, *Jam. 1. 2, 3.* some for a confirming testimony to his Truths, *Aff. 5. 41.* Such Sufferings as these have much heavenly comfort concomitant with them.

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*Concession III.*

We do not say, That God's displeasure with his People for Sin, evidenced against them in the smartest rebukes of the Rod, is any argument that God's love is turned into hatred against their Persons: no, no, his love to his People is unchangeable. Having loved his own, he loved them to the end, *John 13. 1.* yet notwithstanding all this, three things are undeniably clear, and being thoroughly apprehended, will end this Controversy.

1. That God lays his correcting Rod in this World on the Persons of Believers.
2. That this Rod of God is sometimes laid on them for their Sins.
3. That these Fatherly Corrections of them for their Sins, are reconcileable to, and fully consistent with his Justice, compleatly satisfied by the Blood of Christ for all their Sins.

1. That God lays his correcting Rod in this World upon the persons of Believers. This no man can have the face to deny that believes the Scriptures to be

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the Word of God, or that the Troubles of good men in this life fall not out by casualty, but by the counsel and direction of Divine Providence. He that denies the hand of God to be upon the Persons of Believers in this life in the way of painful Chastisements and Sufferings, must either ignorantly, or wilfully, overlook that Scripture, *Heb. 7. 8. What Son is he whom the Father chasteneth not? but if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye Bastards, and not Sons.* Nor will any sober Christian deny these Troubles of Believers to be the effects of God's governing-Providence in the World, or once imagine or affirm them to be mere Casualties and Contingences: for *affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground, Job 5. 6.* In what *Eutopia* doth that good man live upon Earth, that feels not the painful Rod of God upon himself, nor hears the sad laments and moans of other Christians under it! This sure is undeniable, that the Rod of God is every-where upon the Persons and Tabernacles of the Righteous; and if any doubt it, his own sense and feeling may in a little time give him a painful demonstration of it.

2. And

2. And for the second, That this Rod of God is sometimes laid upon Believers for their Sins, methinks no sober modest Christian in the World should doubt, or deny it, when he considers, That

1. God himself hath so declared it.
2. The Saints in all Ages have freely confessed it to be so.

1. God himself hath fully and plainly declared it to be so, 2 Sam. 12. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14. *Wherefore hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord, to do evil in his sight? now therefore the Sword shall never depart from thy House, &c.* Here's the Sword, a terrible and painful Evil, upon David's House, a man after God's own heart, and that expressly for his Sin in the matter of Uriah. So Moses, one of the greatest Favourites of Heaven, for his sinful shifting of the Lord's Work, Exod. 4. 13, 14. *The anger of the Lord was kindled against Moses: For the multitude of thine iniquities, because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee,* saith God to his own Israel, Jer. 30. 15. To instance in all the Declarations made by God himself in this case, were to transcribe a great part of both Testaments.

2. And as God hath declared the Sins of his People to be the provoking causes of his rods upon them ; so they have freely and ingenuously confessed and acknowledged the same, *Lam. 3. 39, 40. Wherefore doth the living man complain? a man for the punishment of his Sins? Let us search and try our ways, and turn again to the Lord.* This was spoken by *Jeremy* in the name of the whole captive Church. So *Psal. 38. 3, 5. There is no soundness in my flesh (saith David) because of thine anger ; neither is there any rest in my bones, because of my Sin. My wounds stink, and are corrupt, because of my foolishness.* And were it not an hideous and unaccountable thing to hear any Child of God, under his Rod, to stand upon his own justification, and say, Lord, my Sins have not deserved this at thy hand, nor is it justice in thee thus to chastise me after thou hast received satisfaction for all my Sins from the hand of Christ. Would it not look like an horrid Blasphemy, to hear the best man in the World disputing and denying the Justice of God in the troubles he lays him under ? For my own part, let the Lord lay on as smartly as he will upon me, I desire to follow the holy Patterns and Presidents recorded in Scripture

ture for my imitation, and to say with the People of God, *Ezr. 9. 13. Thou hast punished me less than mine iniquities deserve.* And *Mica. 7. 9. I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.* And he that refuses so to do, gives little evidence of the Spirit of Adoption in him, but a very clear evidence of the pride and ignorance of his own heart. *Job* indeed stiffly stood upon his own vindication; but that was when he had to do with men, who falsely charged him, laying those Sins as the causes of his trouble, which he was innocent of, *Job 22. 5, 6.* But when he had to do with God, he disputes no more, but saith, *Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth. q. d. I have done, Father, I have done;* Whether these Chastisements be for my Sins or no, sure I am, my Sin not only deserves all this, but Hell it self: Thou art holy, but I am vile.

3. Nor can it at all be doubted, but that these Fatherly Corrections of the Saints for their Sins, are reconcileable to, and fully consistent with his Justice, satisfied by the Blood of Christ for all their Sins. For (1.) If it were not so, the just and righteous God would never have

inserted such a clause of reservation in his gracious Covenant with his People, to chasten them as he saw need, after he had taken them into the Covenant, *Psal.* 89. 30, 31, 32, 33. *If they transgress, he will visit their Transgressions with a Rod, and their Iniquity with Stripes ; nevertheless* (saith he) *my loving-kindness will I not take away.* That [*Nevertheless*] clearly proves the consistency of his stripes for sin, with his loving-kindness to his People , and with Christ's satisfaction for their Sins. (2.) If this were not consistent with the Justice of God, to be sure he would never single them out to spend his Rods upon, rather than others. 'Tis most certain the holiest men have most lashes in this life. *Asaph* said, *Psal.* 73. 12, 14. *The ungodly prosper in the World, but he was chastened every morning.* And *vers.* 5. *The Wicked are not in trouble as other men.* *1 Pet.* 4. 17. *Judgment must begin at the House of God ;* and if Piety would give men an exemption from all troubles, pains, and chastisements, then men might discern love or hatred by the things that are before them, contrary to *Eccl.* 9. 1, 2. Neither could those that are in Christ suffer the painful Agonies of Death because of sin, expressly

expresly contrary to *Paul*, *Rom. 8. 10.*  
*And if Christ be in you, the Body is dead*  
*because of sin.* (3.) In a word, As Christ  
 never shed his Blood to extinguish or  
 abolish God's displeasure against sin in  
 whomsoever it be found, so he never  
 shed it to deprive his People of the mani-  
 fold blessings and advantages that accrue  
 to them by the Rods of God upon them.  
 It was never his intent to put us into a  
 condition on Earth, that would have  
 been so much to our loss. So then, if  
 the hand of God be upon his People for  
 sin, and consistently enough with his Ju-  
 stice, it must be an Error to say, God  
 smites not Believers for their sins, and it  
 would be injustice in him so to do, which  
 is their 6th Error.

## Error VII.

*They tell us; That by God's laying our*  
*Iniquities upon Christ, he became as com-*  
*pletely sinful as we, and we as completely*  
*righteous as Christ. That not only the guilt*  
*and punishment of sin was laid upon Christ;*  
*but simply the very faults that men commit,*  
*the transgression it self became the trans-*  
*gression of Christ: Iniquity it self, not in*  
*any figure, but plainly sin it self, was laid*  
*on Christ: and that Christ himself was not*

*more righteous, than this Person is, and this Person is not more sinful than Christ was.*

*Refutation.*

These two Propositions will never go down with sound and Orthodox Christians. The first sinks and debases Christ too low, the other exalts the sinful Creature too high. The one represents the pure and spotless Lord Jesus as sinful: the other represents the sinful Creature as pure and perfect: and both these Propositions seem evidently to be built upon these two Hypotheses. (1.) *That the righteousness of Christ is subjectively and inherently in us, in the same fulness and perfection it is in Christ:* grant that, and then it will follow indeed, That Christ himself is not more righteous than the Believer is. (2.) *That not only the guilt and punishment of sin was laid on Christ by way of imputation; but sin it self, the very transgression, or sinfulness it self, was transferr'd from the Elect to Christ: and that by God's laying it on him, the sinfulness or fault it self was essentially transfused into him; and so sin it self did transire à subjecto in subjectum.* Grant but this, and it can never be denied

denied but Christ became as compleatly sinful as we.

But both these Hypotheses are not only notoriously false, but utterly impossible, as will be manifested by and by ; But before I come to the Refutation of them, it will be necessary to lay down some Concessions to clear the Orthodox Doctrine in this Controversie, and narrow the matter under debate, as much as may be.

(1.) And first we thankfully acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ to be the *Surety* of the New Testament, *Heb.* 7. 22. and that as such, all the Guilt and Punishment of our Sins, was laid upon him, *Isa.* 53. 5, 6. That is, God imputed, and he bare it in our room and stead. God the Father, as Supreme Law-giver, and Judge of all, upon the Transgression of the Law, admitted the Sponson or Suretiship of Christ, to answer for the sins of men, *Heb.* 10. 5, 6, 7. And for this very end he was made under the Law, *Gal.* 4. 4, 5. And that Christ voluntarily took it upon him to answer as our *Surety*, whatsoever the Law could lay to our charge ; whence it became just and righteous that he should suffer.

(2.) We



(2.) We say, That God by laying upon, or imputing the Guilt of our Sins to Christ, thereby our Sins became legally his; as the Debt is legally the Sureties Debt, tho he never borrowed one farthing of it : Thus God laid, and Christ took our Sins upon him, tho in him was no sin, 2 Cor. 5. 21. *He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin* (i. e.) who was clean and altogether void of sin.

(3.) We thankfully acknowledg, that Christ hath so fully satisfied the Law for the sins of all that are his, that the Debts of Believers are fully discharg'd, and the very last mite paid by Christ. His Payment is full, and so therefore is our Discharge and Acquittance, Rom. 8. 1, 31. And that by virtue hereof the Guilt of Believers is so perfectly abolished, that it shall never more bring them under Condemnation, John 5. 24. And so in Christ they are without fault before God.

(4.) We likewise grant, That as the Guilt of our Sins was by God's Imputation laid upon Christ, so the Righteousness of Christ is by God imputed to Believers by virtue of their Union with Christ; and becomes thereby as truly and fully *theirs*, for the Justification of their par-

particular Persons before God, as if they themselves had in their own Persons fulfilled all that the Law requires, or suffered all that it threatned: No inherent Righteousness in our own Persons, is, or can be more truly our own for this end and purpose, than Christ's imputed Righteousness is our own. He is the Lord *our Righteousness*, Jer. 23. 6. *We are made the righteousness of God in him*, 1 Cor. 5. 21. *Yea, the righteousness of the Law is fulfilled in them that believe*, Rom. 8. 4.

But notwithstanding all this, we cannot say, (1.) That Christ became as compleatly sinful as we. Or (2.) That we are as compleatly righteous as Christ; and that over and above the Guilt and Punishment of Sin, (which we grant was laid upon Christ) Sin it self simply considered, or the very Transgression it self, became the Sin or Transgression of Christ; and consequently that we are as compleatly Righteous as Christ, and Christ as compleatly Sinful as we are.

1. We dare not say, That Sin simply consider'd, as the very Transgression of the Law it self, as well as the Guilt and Punishment, became the very Sin and Transgression of Christ: For two things  
are

are distinctly to be considered and differed, With respect to the Law, and unto Sin. As to the Law, we are to consider in it,

1. Its Preceptive part.

2. Its Sanction.

(1.) The preceptive part of the Law, which gives Sin its formal Nature, 1 *Joh.* 3. 4. *For sin is the transgression of the law.* All Transgression arises from the Preceptive part of the Law of God : He that transgresseth the Precepts, sinneth ; and under this consideration sin can never be communicated from one to another : The Personal sin of one cannot be in this respect the Personal sin of another : There is no Physical Transfusion of the Transgression of the Precept from one subject into another : This is utterly impossible ; even *Adam's* personal sins consider'd in his single private capacity, are not communicable to his Posterity.

(2.) Besides the Transgression of the Preceptive part of the Law, there is an obnoxiousness unto Punishment, arising from the Sanction of the Law, which we call the Guilt of Sin ; and this (as Judicious Dr. *Owen* observes ) is separable from sin : And if it were not separable from the former, no sinner in the world could

could either be pardoned or sav'd : Guilt may be made another's by Imputation, and yet that other not rendred formally a sinner thereby : Upon this ground we say, the Guilt and Punishment of our Sin, was that only which was imputed unto Christ ; but the very Transgression of the Law it self, or Sin formally and essentially consider'd , could never be communicated or transfused from us into him. I know but two ways in the world by which one man's sins can be imagined to become another's, viz. Either by *Imputation*, which is Legal, and what we affirm ; or by *Essential Transfusion* from subject to subject ( as our Adversaries fancy ) which is utterly impossible ; and we have as good ground to believe the absurd Doctrine of Transubstantiation, as this wild notion of the Essential Transfusion of Sin. Guilt arising from the Sanction of the Law, may and did pass from us to Christ by Legal Imputation ; but sin it self, the very Transgression it self, arising from the very Preceptive part of the Law, cannot so pass from us to Christ : For if we should once imagine that the very acts and habits of sin, with the odious deformity thereof, should pass from our Persons to Christ, and subjectively

jectively to inhere in him, as they do in us; then it would follow,

First, That our Salvation would thereby be rendred utterly impossible. For such an inhesion of Sin in the Person of Christ, is absolutely inconsistent with the *Hypostatical Union*, which Union is the very Foundation of his Satisfaction, and our Salvation. Tho the Divine Nature can, and doth dwell in Union with the pure and Sinless human Nature of Christ, yet it cannot dwell in Union with Sin.

Secondly, This Supposition would render the Blood of the Cross altogether unable to satisfy for us. He could not have been the Lamb of God to take away the Sins of the World, if he had not been perfectly pure and spotless, *1 Pet. i. 19.*

Thirdly, Had our Sins thus been essentially transfus'd into Christ, the Law had had a just and valid Exception against him; for it accepts of nothing but what is absolutely pure and perfect. I admire, therefore, how any good Man dares to call our Doctrine which teaches the Imputation of our Guilt and Punishment to Christ, a simple Doctrine; and assert, that the Transgression it self became Christ's; and that thereby Christ became as compleatly sinful as we. And, Fourthly,

Fourthly, If the way of making our Sins Christ's by imputation, be thus rejected and derided; and Christ asserted by some other way to become as compleatly sinful as we; then I cannot see which way to avoid it, but that the very same Acts and Habits of Sin must inhere, both in Christ, and in Believers also. For, I suppose our Adversaries will not deny that, notwithstanding God's laying the Sins of Believers upon Christ, there remain in all Believers after their Justification, sinful Inclinations and Aver-sations; a Law of Sin in their Members, a Body of Sin and Death. Did these things pass from them to Christ, and yet do they still inhere in them? Why do they complain and groan of in-dwelling Sin? as *Rom. 7*. If Sin it self be so transferr'd from them to Christ? Sure, unless Men will dare to say, the same Acts and Habits of Sin which they feel in themselves, are as truly in Christ as in themselves; they have no ground to say, that by God's laying their Iniquities upon Christ, he became as compleatly sinful as they are; and if they should so affirm, that Affirmation would undermine the very Foundation of their own Salvation.

I there-

Owen, Of  
Justificati-  
on, p. 283.

I therefore heartily subscribe to that sound and holy Sentence, of a clear and learned Divine, *Nothing is more absolutely true, nothing more sacredly and assuredly believ'd by us, than that nothing which Christ did or suffer'd, nothing that he undertook, or underwent, did, or could constitute him subjectively, inherently, and thereupon personally a Sinner, or guilty of any Sin of his own. To bear the Guilt or Blame of other Mens Faults, to be alienæ culpæ reus, makes no Man a Sinner, unless he did unwisely or irregularly undertake it.* So, then this Proposition, that by God's laying our Sins upon Christ (in some other way, than by Imputation of Guilt and Punishment) he became as compleatly sinful as we, will not, ought not to be receiv'd as the sound Doctrine of the Gospel. Nor yet this

#### Second Proposition.

*That we are as compleatly Righteous as Christ is; or, that Christ is not more Righteous than a Believer.*

I cannot imagine what should induce any Man so to express himself, unless it be a groundless conceit and fancy, that there is an essential Transfusion of Christ's justifying Righteousness into Believers,

lievers, whereby it becomes theirs by way of subjective inhesion, and is in them in the very same manner it is in him: And so every individual Believer becomes as compleatly Righteous as Christ. And this conceit they would fain establish upon that Text, 1 *Joh.* 3. 7. *He that doth righteousness, is righteous, even as he is righteous.*

But neither this expression, nor any other like it in the Scriptures, gives the least countenance to such a general and unwary Position. It is far from the mind of this Scripture, That the righteousness of Christ is formally and inherently ours, as it is his. Indeed it is ours *relatively*, not *formally* and *inherently*; not the same with his for *quantity*, though it be the same for *verity*. His Righteousness is not ours in its *Universal value*, though it be ours, as to our *particular use and necessity*. Nor is it made ours to make us so many *causes* of Salvation to others; but it is imputed to us as to the *Subjects*, that are to be saved by it ourselves.

'Tis true, we are justified, and saved by the very Righteousness of Christ, and no other; but that Righteousness is *formally inherent* in him only, and is only



*materially* imputed to us. It was *actively* his, but *passively* ours. He wrought it, though we wear it. It was wrought in the person of God-man for the whole Church, and is imputed (not transfused) to every single Believer for his own concernment only. For,

(1.) It is most absurd to imagine that the Righteousness of Christ should formally inhere in the person of all, or any Believer, as it doth in the person of the Mediator. The impossibility hereof appears plainly from the incapacity of the Subject. The Righteousness of Christ is an Infinite Righteousness, because it is the Righteousness of God-man, and can therefore be subjected in no other person beside him. It is capable of being imputed to a finite creature, and therefore in the way of imputation we are said *to be made the righteousness of God in him*: but though it may be imputed to a finite creature, it inheres only in the person of the Son of God, as in its proper subject. And indeed,

(2.) If it should be inherent in us, it could not be imputed to us as it is, *Rom. 4. 6, 23*. Nor need we go out of our selves for justification, as now we must, *Phil. 3. 9*. but may justify our  
selves

selves by our own inherent Righteousness. And

(3<sup>dly</sup>,) What should hinder, if this Infinite Righteousness of Christ were infused into us, and should make us as compleatly righteous as Christ; but that we might justify others also, as Christ doth: and so we might be the Saviours of the Elect, as Christ is? Which is most absurd to imagine. And

(4<sup>thly</sup>,) According to *Antinomian Principles*, What need was there that we should be justified at all? Or, what place is left for the justification of any sinner in the World? For according to their Opinion, the justification of the Elect is an immanent act of God before the World was; and that Eternal act of Justification, making the Elect as compleatly Righteous as Christ himself, there could not possibly be any the least guilt in the Elect to be pardoned; and consequently no place, or room could be left for any Justification in time. And then it must follow, that seeing Christ died in time for sin, according to the Scriptures; It must be for his own sins that he died, and not for the sins of the Elect; Diametrically opposite to *Rom. 4.25.* and the whole current of Scripture, and faith of Christians.

'Tis therefore very unbecoming and unworthy of a justified person, after Christ hath taken all his guilt upon himself, and suffer'd all the punishment due thereunto in his place and room : Instead of an humble and thankful admiration of his unparallel'd grace therein, to throw more than the guilt and punishment of his sins upon Christ, even the transgression it self : and comparing his own Righteousness with Christ's, to say he is as compleatly Righteous as Christ himself. This is as if a company of Bankrupt Debtors Arrested for their own Debts, ready to be cast into Prison, and not having one Farthing to satisfy, after their Debts have been freely and fully discharg'd by another, out of his immense treasure ; should now compare with him, yea, and think they honour'd him, by telling him, that now they are as compleatly Rich as himself.

I am well assur'd no good Man would embrace an Opinion so derogatory to Christ's Honour as this is ; did he but see the odious consequences of it, doubtless he would abhor them as much as we. And as for those now in Heaven, who fell into such mistakes in the way thither, were they now acquainted with what is trans-

transacted here below, they would exceedingly rejoyce in the detection of those mistakes, and Bless God for the refutation of them.

## Error VIII.

*They affirm, That Believers need not fear their own sins, nor the sins of others; for as much as neither their own, or others sins can do them any hurt, nor must they do any duty for their own good, or salvation, or for eternal rewards.*

That we need fear no hurt from sin, or may not aim at our own good in Duty, are two Propositions that sound harsh in the ears of Believers: I shall consider them severally, and refute them as briefly as I can.

## Proposition I.

*Believers need not fear their own sins, or the sins of others; because neither our own, or others sins can do us any hurt.*

They seem to be induced into this Error, by misunderstanding the Apostle, in Rom. 8. 28. as if the scope of that Text were to assert the benefits of sin to justified persons; whereas he speaks there of Adversities and Afflictions befalling the Saints in this Life. *Universalis restrin-*

*genda est ad materiam subjectam, loquitur enim de afflictionibus piorum.* The subject matter (saith Pareus on the place) restrains the Universal expression of the Apostle: For when he there saith, *All things shall work together for good*; he principally intends the afflictions of the Godly, of which he treats there in that context. It may be extended also to all providential events; *Omnia quaecunque eis accedunt forinsecus, tam adversa, quam prospera*: All adverse and prosperous events of things without us, as *Estius* upon the place notes. Nothing is spoken of sin in this Text. And the Apostle distributing this General into Particulars, *verse 38.* plainly shews, what are the things he intended by his Universal expression, *verse 28.* as also in what respect no creature can do the Saints any hurt, namely, that they shall never be able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And in this respect it is true that the Sins of the Elect shall not hurt them, by frustrating the purpose of God concerning their Eternal Salvation; or totally and finally to separate them from his Love. This we grant, and yet we think it a very unwary, and unsound expression, *That Believers*

lievers need not fear their own sins, because they can do them no hurt: 'Tis too general and unguarded a Proposition to be received for truth. What if their sins cannot do them that hurt, to frustrate the purpose of God, and Damn them to Eternity in the World to come? Can it therefore do them no hurt at all in their present state of conflict with it in this World? For my part, I think the greatest fear of caution is due to sin, the greatest evil; and that *Chrysostome* spake more like a Christian, when he said, *Nil nisi peccatum timeo*, I fear nothing but sin. Though sin cannot finally ruine the Believer, yet it can many ways hurt and injure the Believer; and therefore ought not to be misrepresented as such an innocent and harmless thing to them. In vain are so many terrible threatnings in the Scriptures against it, if it can do us no hurt; and it is certain nothing can do us good, but that which makes us better, and more Holy: But Sin can never pretend to that, of all things in the World. But to come to an issue, Sin may be consider'd three ways.

- 1. Formally.
- 2. Effectively.
- 3. Reductively.

*First, Formally*, as a transgression of the Preceptive part of the Law of God, and under that consideration it is the most formidable evil in the whole World. The evil of evils, at which every gracious heart trembles, and ought rather to chuse Banishment, Prison, and Death it self in the most terrible form, than Sin, or that which is most tempting in Sin, the pleasures of it; as *Moses* did, *Heb. 11. 25.*

*Secondly*, Sin may be consider'd *Effectively*, with respect to the manifold mischiefs and calamities it produceth in the World, and the Spiritual and Corporeal Evils it infers upon Believers themselves: Though it cannot Damn their Souls, yet it makes War against their Souls, and brings them into miserable Bondage and Captivity, *Rom. 7. 23.* It wounds their Souls, under which wounds they are feeble and fore broken; yea, they roar by reason of the disquietness of their hearts, *Psal. 38. 5, 8.* Is War, Captivity, Festering painful Wounds, causing them to roar, no hurt to Believers? It breaks their very Bones, *Pf. 51. 8.* And is that no hurt? It draws off their Minds from God, interrupts their Prayers and Meditations, *Rom. 7. 18, 19, 20, 21.*  
And

And is there no hurt in that? It causeth their Graces to decline, wither, and languish to that degree, that the things which are in them are ready to die, *Rev.* 3. 1. and *Rev.* 2. 4. And is the loss of Grace and Spiritual strength, no hurt to a Believer? It hides the Face of God from them, *Isa.* 59. 2. And is there no hurt in spiritual withdrawments of God from their Souls? Why then do deserted Saints so bitterly lament and bemoan it? It provokes innumerable afflictions and miseries, which fall upon our Bodies, Relations, Estates; and if Sin be the cause of all these inward and outward miseries to the People of God, sure then there is some hurt in Sin, for which the Saints ought to be afraid of it.

*Thirdly*, Sin may be consider'd *Reductively*, as it is over-ruled, reduced, and finally issued by the Covenant of Grace. Under this consideration of sin, which rather respects the future, than present state, the *Antinomians* only respect the hurt, or evil of it; over-looking both the former considerations of sin, which concern the present state of Believers, and so rashly pronounce, sin can do Believers no hurt. An Assertion tending to a great deal



deal of looseness and licentiousness. A Man drinks deadly Poison, and is after many months recover'd by the skill of an excellent Physician ; shall we say, there was no hurt in it, because the man died not of it : sure those fearful twinges he felt, his loss of strength and stomach, were hurtful to him, tho he escaped with life, and got this advantage by it, to be more wary for ever after. *Tantum Religio potuit suadere malorum.*

And then for other mens sins, (which they say we need not fear) 'tis an Assertion against all the Laws of Charity. For the sins of wicked men eternally damn them : Disturb the Peace and Order of the World : Draw down National Judgments upon the whole Community : Cause Wars, Plagues, Persecutions, &c. Which Considerations of the sins of others, opened fountains of tears in David's Eyes, *Psal.* 119, 136. caused horror to take hold upon him, *vers.* 53. And yet if you will believe the *Antinomian* Doctrine, Believers have no need to fear, much less be in horror (which is the extremity of fear) for other mens sins. How is Satan gratified, and temptations to sin strengthened upon the Souls of men, by such indistinct, unwary,

wary, and dangerous Expressions as these are? A good Intention can be no sufficient salvo for such Assertions as these.

*Secondly*, "They tell us, That as the  
 "Saints need fear no sin for any *hurt* it  
 "can do them, so they must do no duty  
 "for their own *good*; or with an eye to  
 "their own Salvation, or Eternal Re-  
 "wards in Heaven.

*Refutation.*

This, as the former, is too generally and indistinctly deliver'd. He that distinguisheth well, teacheth well. The confounding of things which ought to be distinguish'd, easily runs men into the bogs of Errors. Two things ought to have been distinguish'd here :

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 1. Ends      | } in Duties. |
| 2. Self-ends |              |

First, *Ends in Duty*; There are two ends in Duties : one *supream* and *ultimate*, viz. the glorifying of God, which must, and ought to take the first place of all other ends. Another *secondary* and *subordinate*, viz. the good and benefit of our selves. To invert these, and place our own good in the room of God's Glory,

Glory, is sinful and unjustifiable ; and he that aims only at himself in Religion, is justly censured as a mercenary Servant, especially if it be any external good he aims at ; but spiritual good, especially the enjoyment of God, is so involv'd in the other, *viz.* the glory of God, that no man can rightly take the Lord for his God, but he must take him for his Supreme Good, and consequently therein may, and must have a due respect to his own happiness.

Secondly, *Self-ends* must also be distinguished into

1. Corrupt, or carnal Self-ends.
2. Pure and spiritual Self-ends.

As to carnal and corrupt Self-ends, inviting and moving men to the performance of Religious Duties : when these are the only Ends men aim at, they bewray the Hypocrisy of the Heart : and accordingly God charges Hypocrisy upon such Persons, *Hosea 7. 14. They have not cried unto me with their heart, when they howled upon their Beds : they assemble themselves for Corn and Wine, &c.* God reckons not the most solemn Duties animated by such Ends, to be done unto him, *Zech. 7. 5. Did ye at all fast to me ?* But

But beside these, Man hath a *best self*, a *spiritual self*, to regard in duty, *viz.* The conformity of his Soul to God in holiness, and the perfect fruition of God in glory. Such holy Self-ends as these, are often commended, but nowhere condemned in Scripture. 'Twas the Encomium of *Moses*, That *he had respect unto the recompence of reward*, Heb. 11. 26. These ordinate respects to our spiritual best self, are so far from being our sin, that God both appoints and allows them for great uses and advantages to his People in their way to glory. They are (1.) Singular Encouragements to the Saints under Persecution, Streights and Distresses, *Heb.* 10. 34. And to that end Christ proposes them, *Luke* 12. 32. And so the best of Saints have made use of them, *2 Cor.* 4. 17, 18. (2.) They are Motives and Incentives to Praise and Thankfulness, *1 Pet.* 1. 3, 4. *1 Coloss.* 12. (3.) They stir up the Saints to chearful and vigorous industry for God, *Col.* 3. 23, 24. *1 Cor.* 15. 58.

Now to cut off from Religion all these spiritual and excellent Self-respects, and to make them our sins, and marks of our Hypocrisy, is an Error very injurious to the Gospel, and to the Souls of Men.

Men. For (1.) it crosses the strain of the Gospel, which commands us to strive for our Salvation, *Luk. 13. 24, 25. Phil. 2. 12. 1 Tim. 4. 16.* (2.) It blames that in the Saints as sinful, which the Scripture notes as their excellency, and records to their praise, *Heb. 11. 26.* (3.) It makes the Laws of Christianity to thwart and cross the very fundamental Law of our Creation, which inclines and obliges all men to intend their own Felicity. And on this account, not only our *Antinomians* are blame-worthy, but others also, who are far enough from their Opinion, who urge humiliation for sin beyond the Staple: teaching men, they are not humbled enough till they be content to be damned. (4.) It unreasonably supposes a Christian may not do that for his own Soul, which he daily doth, and is bound to do for other mens Souls, *viz.* to pray, preach, exhort and reprove for their Salvation.

## Error IX.

Vide Salt-marsh, of Free-grace, pag. 126, 127.

*"They will not allow the New Covenant to be properly made with us, but with Christ for us. And some of them affirm, That this Covenant is all of it a Promise, having no Condition upon our part.*

“part. They acknowledge indeed Faith,  
“Repentance and Obedience, to be Condi-  
“tions, but say they are not Conditions on  
“our part, but on Christ’s; and conse-  
“quently affirm, That he repented, belie-  
“ved, and obeyed for us.

*Refutation.*

(1.) The confounding of distinct Covenants, leads them into this Error; we acknowledge there was a Covenant properly made with Christ alone, which we call the *Covenant of Redemption*. This Covenant indeed, though it were made for us, yet it was not made with us. It had its Condition, and that Condition was laid only upon Christ: viz. That he should assume our Nature, and pour out his Soul unto death, which Condition he was solely concerned to perform; but beside this, there is a *Covenant of Grace* made with him, and with all Believers in him: with him *primarily* as the Head, with them as the Members, who personally come into this Covenant, when they come into union with him by Faith. This Covenant of Grace is not made with Christ alone, personally considered, but with Christ, and all that are his, mystically considered, and is properly made with

with all Believers in Christ; and therefore it is called their Covenant, *Zech. 9. 11.* *As for thee also, by the blood of thy Covenant I have sent forth thy Prisoners out of the Pit wherein is no water.* So when God entred into the Covenant of Grace with *Abraham, Gen. 17. 7.* *I will establisb my Covenant (saith he) between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee.* So when he took the People of *Israel* into this Covenant, *Ezek. 16. 8.* *I sware unto thee (saith he) and entred into a Covenant with thee, and thou becamest mine.*

This Covenant of Grace made with Believers in Christ, is not the same, nor must it be confounded with the Covenant of *Redemption* made with Christ before the World began. They are two distinct Covenants; for in the Covenant of Grace, into which Believers are taken, there is a *Mediator*, and this Mediator is Christ himself; but in the other *Covenant of Redemption* there neither was, nor could be any *Mediator*, which manifestly distinguishes them. Besides, In the Covenant of Grace Christ bequeaths manifold and rich Legacies, as he is the Testator; but no man gives a Legacy to himself. This Covenant is really and properly made with every Believer





lieving for us, give us an actual Right and Title to the Promises and Blessings of the New Covenant, then it will unavoidably follow,

(1.) That men, who never repented for one sin in all their lives, may be, nay, certainly are pardoned as much as the greatest Penitents in the World; because though they never repented themselves, yet Christ repented for them: expressly contrary to his own words, *Luke 13. 3. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* And contrary to his own established Order, *Luke 29. 47. Acts 3. 19.*

(2.) It will also follow, That Unbelievers, who never had union with Christ by one vital act of Faith in all their lives, may be, nay certainly shall be saved, as well as those that are actual Believers: because though they be Unbelievers in themselves, yet Christ believed for them: expressly contrary to *Mark 16. 16. He that believeth not, shall be damned. John 3. 36. He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him. And Luke 12. 46. He will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with unbelievers.*

(3.) It will also follow from hence, That men may continue in a state of disobedience

obedience all their days, and yet may be fav'd as well as the most obedient Souls in the World: expressly contrary to Eph. 5. 6. *Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things, cometh the wrath of God upon the Children of disobedience.* And Rom. 2. 8. *But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation, and wrath.* And 1 Pet. 4. 17. *What shall the end of them be that obey not the Gospel of God!*

This Language sounds strange and harsh to the Ears of Christians; a repenting Christ saving the impenitent Sinner: A believing Christ saving Unbelievers: An obeying Christ saving obstinate and disobedient Wretches. Whither doth such Doctrine tend, but to encourage and fix men in their impenitence, unbelief, and disobedience? But the Lord grant no poor Sinner in the World may trust to this, or build his hopes of Eternal Life upon such a loose, sandy foundation as this is. Reader, All that Christ hath done without thee, will not, cannot be effectual to thy Salvation, unless Repentance, Faith and Obedience be wrought by the Spirit in thy Soul. 'Tis Christ in thee that is the hope of glory;

Col. 1. 27. Beware therefore on what ground thou buildest for Eternity.

### Error X.

*"They deny Sanctification to be the evidence of Justification; and deridingly tell us, This is to light a Candle to the Sun; and the darker our Sanctification is, the brighter our Justification is.*

### Refutation.

I am not at all surprized at this strange and absonous Language. 'Tis a false and dangerous Conclusion, yet such as naturally results from, and by a kind of necessity follows out of their other Errors. For if the Elect be all justified from Eternity, and that neither Repentance, Faith or Obedience be required of us in the Covenant of Grace; but were all required of, and performed by Christ, who repented, believed, and obeyed for us; then indeed I cannot understand what relation our Sanctification hath to our Justification; or how it should be an evidence, mark or sign thereof: or what regard is due from Christians to any Grace or Work of the Spirit wrought in them, to clear up their Interest in Christ to them. For we being in Christ,  
and

and in a state of Justification, before we were naturally born, we must necessarily be so before we be regenerated, or new-born; and consequently, no work of Grace wrought in us, or holy Duties performed by us, can be evidential of that which from Eternity was done before them, and without them.

(1.) I grant indeed, That many vain Professors do cheat and deceive themselves by false unscriptural signs and evidences, as well as by true ones misapplied.

(2.) I grant also, That by reason of the deceitfulness of the Heart, instability of the Thoughts, similar works of common Grace in Hypocrites, Distractions of the World, Wiles of Satan, weakness of Grace, and prevalency of Corruptions: the clearing up of our Justification by our Sanctification, is a work that meets with great and manifold Difficulties, which are the things that most Christians complain of.

(3.) I also grant, That the evidence of our Sanctification in this, or any other method, is not essential, and absolutely necessary to the being of a Christian. A man may live in Christ, and yet not know his interest in him, or relation to

him, *Isa.* 50. 10. Some Christians, like Children in the Cradle, live, but understand not that they live: are born to a great Inheritance, but have no knowledge of it, or present comfort in it.

(4.) I will further grant, That the Eye of a Christian may be too intently fixed upon his own gracious qualification; and being wholly taken up in the reflex Acts of Faith, may too much neglect the direct Acts of Faith upon Christ, to the great detriment of his Soul.

But all this notwithstanding, The examination of our Justification by our Sanctification, is not only a lawful, and possible, but a very excellent and necessary work and duty. 'Tis the course that Christians have taken in all Ages. And that which God hath abundantly blessed to the joy and encouragement of their Souls.

He hath furnished our Souls to this end with noble self-reflecting Powers and Abilities. He hath answerably furnished his Word with variety of marks and signs for the same end and use. Some of these marks are *exclusive* to detect and bar bold presumptuous Pretenders, *1 Cor.* 6. 9. *Rev.* 21. 8, 27. Some are *inclusive marks*, to measure the strength and

and growth of Grace by, *Rom. 4. 20.* And others are *positive signs*, flowing out of the very essence of Grace, or the New-Creature, *1 John 4. 13. Hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.*

He hath also expressely commanded us to examine and prove our selves: upbraided the neglectors of that duty, and enforced their duty upon them by a thundering Argument, *2 Cor. 13. 5. Examine your selves whether ye be in the faith, prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be Reprobates.* In a word, For this end and purpose, amongst others, were the Scriptures written, *1 John 5. 13. These things have I written to you, that believe on the name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life.* And therefore to neglect this duty, is exceeding dangerous; but to deny, and deride it, intolerable. It may justly be feared, such men will be drown'd in perdition, who fall into the waters, by making a bridge over them with their own shadows.

For my own part, I verily believe that the sweetest hours Christians enjoy in this World, is, when they retire into their Closets, and sit there concealed from all

eyes, but him that made them ; looking now into the *Bible*, then into their own *Hearts*, and then up to *God* : closely following the grand Debate about their Interest in *Christ*, till they have brought it to the happy desired issue.

And now, Reader, for a close of all, I call the Searcher of Hearts to witness, That I have not intermeddled with these Controversies of *Antipædobaptism*, and *Antinomianism*, out of any delight I take in Polemical Studies, or an unpeaceable contradicting Humour, but out of pure zeal for the Glory and Truths of God, for the vindication and defence whereof, I have been necessarily ingaged therein. And having discharged my duty thus far, I now resolve to return (if God will permit me) to my much sweeter and more agreeable Studies; Still maintaining my Christian Charity for those whom I oppose ; not doubting but I shall meet those in Heaven, from whom I am forced in lesser things to dissent and differ upon Earth.

F I N I S.

GOSPEL-UNITY  
 Recommended to the  
 CHURCHES of CHRIST:  
 IN A  
 SERMON

Preached by J. F.  
 Author of the Foregoing DISCOURSE.

FROM  
 I COR. I. 10.

*Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name  
 of our Lord Jesus Christ, That ye all  
 speak the same thing; and that there be  
 no divisions among you; but that ye be  
 perfectly joined together in the same  
 mind, and in the same judgment.*

**W**HEN I consider this  
 Healing and Uniting  
 Text, and the scandalous  
 Divisions of the Congre-  
 gations to which I recommend it, I  
 could chuse rather to comment thereon  
 with Tears, than Words. 'Tis just mat-  
 ter of lamentation, to think what feeble  
 influences such Divine and Pathetical Ex-  
 hortations have upon the minds and  
 hearts



hearts of professed Christians. But it is not Lamentations, but proper Counsels, and convictions obey'd, must do the work.

The Primitive and Purest Churches of Christ, consisted of imperfect Members, who notwithstanding they were knit together by the same internal bond of the Spirit, and the same external bonds of common Profession, and common Danger, and enjoyed extraordinary helps for uniting, in the Presence and Doctrine of the Apostles among them; yet quickly discovered a Schismatical Spirit, dividing both in Judgment and Affection, to the great Injury of Religion, and Grief of the Apostle's Spirits. To check and heal this growing-Evil in the Church at *Corinth*, the Apostle addresses his Pathetical Exhortation to them, and to all future Churches of Christ, whom it equally concerns, in the words of my Text. *Now I beseech you, brethren, &c.* Where note

1. The Duty exhorted to.

2. The Arguments enforcing the Duty.

1. The Duty exhorted to; namely, Unity; the Beauty, Strength, and Glory, as well as the Duty of a Church. This Unity he describes two ways, 1. As it is Exclusive of its opposite, Schism or Division. All Rents, and rash Separations,

tions, are contrary to it, and destructive of it: *I beseech you, brethren, that there be no Divisions [or Schisms] among you.*

2. As it is inclusive of all that belongs to it; namely, the Harmony and Agreement of their Judgments, Hearts, and Language. (1.) That ye all speak the same thing. (2.) That ye be perfectly joined together in one Mind. And (3.) In the same Judgment. This threefold Union in Judgment, Affection, and Language, includes all that belongs to Christian Concord, makes the Saints *Σύνδυτοι*, men of one Heart and Soul, the loveliest sight this World affords, *Acts* 2. 46, 47.

(2.) The Arguments enforcing this Duty upon them, comes next under consideration. And these are Three. (1.) *I beseech you.* (2.) *I beseech you, Brethren,* (3.) *I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* These Arguments are not of equal Force and Efficacy: The first is great: The second greater: The last the most efficacious, and irresistible, of all the rest: But all together should come with such Power, and irresistible Efficacy upon the Judgments, Consciences, and Hearts of Christians, as should perfectly knit them together, and defeat all the Designs of Satan, and his Agents,

gents without them, or of their own Corruptions within them, to rend asunder their Affections or Communion.

*Arg. 1.* And first, he enforces the Duty of Unity by a solemn Apostolical Obsecration and Adjuration; *I beseech* you, saith he; he had Power to command them to this Duty, and threaten them for the neglect of it: He had in readiness to revenge all Disobedience, and might have shaken that Rod over them; but he chuseth rather to intreat and beseech them: Now *I beseech* you, Brethren: Here you have, as it were, the great *Apostle* upon his knees before them, Meekly and Pathetically entreating them to be at perfect Unity among themselves. 'Tis the intreaty of their Spiritual Father, that had begotten them to Christ. Now [I] beseech you, brethren, *I* who was the Instrument in Christ's hand, of your Conversion to him: *I*, that have planted you a Gospel-Church, and assiduously watered you: *I* beseech you by all the spiritual ties and endearments betwixt me and you, that there be no Divisions among you. This is the first Argument, wrapt up in a solemn Obsecration.

Next, he enforces the Duty of Unity, by the nearness of their Relation; *I beseech*

feech you, *Brethren*: Brotherhood is an endearing thing, and naturally draws Affection and Unity with it, 1 Pet. 3. 8. *Be ye all of one mind; having compassion one of another; love as brethren; be pitiful, be courteous; ye are the children of one Father, joint-heirs of one and the same inheritance.* To see an Egyptian smiting an *Israelite*, is no strange sight; but to see one *Israelite* quarrelling another, is most unnatural and uncomely: The nearer the Relation, the stronger the Affection: *How good and how pleasant is it, (saith the Psalmist) for Brethren to dwell together in Unity! Psal. 133. 1.*

But the greatest Argument of all is the last, *viz. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.* In this name he beseeches and intreats them to be at perfect Unity among themselves. In the former he sweetly insinuated the duty by a loving *compellation*, but here he sets it home by a solemn *Adjuration*; I beseech you, brethren, *by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*: That is to say, (1.) For Christ's Sake, or for the Love of Christ; by all that Christ hath done, suffered, or purchased for you; and as Christ is dear and precious to you, let there be no Divisions. If you have any Love for Christ, don't grieve him, and ob-

obstruct his great design in the world, by your Scandalous Schisms. Mr. *John Fox* never denied a Beggar that asked an Alms of him, for Christ Jesus Sake.

2. *In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ*; that is, in the Authority of Christ; for so his Name also signifies, 1 Cor. 5. 4. and it is as if he had said, If you reverence the Supreme Authority and Sovereignty of Christ, which is the Fountain out of which so many solemn Commands of Unity do flow; then see, as you will answer it to him at the Great Day, that ye be perfectly joined together in one Mind, and in one Judgment. The Point will be this:

### D O C T.

*Unity amongst Believers, especially in particular Church-Relation, is as desirable a Mercy, as it is a necessary and indispensable Duty.*

How desirable a Mercy it is, and how necessary a Duty, let the same Apostle, who presseth it upon the *Corinthians* in my Text, be heard again, enforcing the same Duty with the same warmth, upon the Church at *Philippi*, chap. 2. v. 1, 2. *If there be therefore any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship*

*lowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercies, fulfil ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* In handling this Point, I will shew,

1. What Unity among Believers is.
2. How the necessity and desirableness of it, may be evinced.
3. And then lay down the Motives and Directions about it.

(1.) What Unity amongst Believers is, and more particularly such Believers as stand in particular Church-Relation to each other.

There is a twofold Union, one *Mystical*, betwixt Christ and Believers; another *Moral*, betwixt Believers themselves: Faith knits them all to Christ, and then Love knits them one to another. Their common relation to Christ their Head, endears them to each other as Fellow-Members in the same Body. Hence they become *Sanguine Christi conglutinati*; Glued together by the Blood of Christ. Union with Christ is fundamental to all Union among the Saints. Perfect Union would flow from this their common Union with Christ their Head, were they not here in an imperfect state, where their

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corruptions disturb and hinder it; and as soon as they shall attain unto compleat Sanctification, they shall also attain unto perfect Unity. How their Unity with one another comes by way of necessary resultancy from their Union with Christ; and how this Unity among themselves shall at last arise to its just perfection, that one Text plainly discovers, *John 17. 23. I in them, and thou in me; that they may be made perfect in one, &c.*

Unity amongst those that hold not the Head, is rather a Conspiracy, than a Gospel-unity. Believers and unbelievers may have a Political or Civil union; but there's no Spiritual unity, but what flows from joint-membership in Christ. I will not deny, but in particular Churches there may be, and still are some Hypocrites, who hold Communion with the Saints, and pretend to belong unto Christ, the same Head with them; but as they have no real Union with Christ, so neither have they any sincere affection to the Saints; and these for the most part, are they that raise tumults and divisions in the Church, as disloyal Subjects do in the Commonwealth. Of these the *Apostle* speaks, *1 Joh. 2. 19. They went out from us,*

*us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that it might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*

Sincere Christianity holds fast the Soul by a firm bond of Life to the truly Christian Community, wherein they reap those spiritual pleasures and advantages which assure their continuance therein to a great degree: But those that joyn with the Church upon carnal and external inducements, make little conscience of rending from it; and God permits their Schismatical Spirits thus to act, for the discovering of their Hypocrisy, or (as the Text speaks) *that it might be made manifest they were not of us*; as also that they which are approved, may by their constancy be also made manifest, 1 Cor. 11. 19.

It hath indeed been said, That it's never better with the Church, than when there are most Hypocrites in it; but then you must understand it only with respect to the external tranquillity and prosperity of the Church; for as to its real, spiritual advantage, they add nothing: And therefore it behoves Church-Officers and Members to be exceeding careful

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(especially in times of Liberty and Prosperity) how they admit Members, as the Jews in Solomon's time were of admitting Profelytes. 'Tis said, *Amos 3. 3. How can two walk together except they be agreed?* I deny not but persons that differ in some lesser points as to their Judgment, may, and ought to be one in Affection: But of this I am sure, that when Sanctified persons, agreed in Judgments and Principles, do walk together under pious and judicious Church-officers, in tender affection, and the exercise of all duties tending to mutual edification, glorifying God with one mouth, *Rom. 15. 6.* and cleaving together with oneness of heart, *Acts 2. 42.* This is such a Church-unity as answers Christ's end in the institution of particular Churches; and greatly tends to their own comfort, and the propagation of Christianity in the World. Tongue-unity flows from Heart-unity; Heart-unity, in a great measure, from Head-unity; and all three from Union with the Lord Jesus Christ. The divisions of our Tongues come mostly from the divisions of our Hearts; were Hearts agreed, Tongues would quickly be agreed; And then what blessed times might be expected?

ed? And so much briefly for the nature of Unity. Next,

(2.) Let us evince both the necessity and desirableness of this Unity among Believers; and this will appear in a three-fold respect: *viz.*

1. With respect to the Glory of God.
2. The Comfort and Benefit of our own Souls.
3. The Conversion and Salvation of the World.

(1.) With respect to the Glory of God. The manifestative Glory of God (which is all the Glory we are capable of giving him, is the very end of our Being, and should be dearer to us than our Lives) is exceedingly advanced by the Unity of his people. Hence is the Apostle's Prayer, *Rom. 15. 5, 6. Now the God of patience and consolation, grant you to be like minded one towards another, according to Christ Jesus, that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify God.* 'Tis highly remarkable, That the Apostle in this Petition for the Unity of the Saints, doth not only describe that Unity he

prays for, one Mouth and one Mind, and shews how much God would be glorified by such an Union; but he also addresses himself to God for it, under these two remarkable Titles, the *God of patience and consolation*; thereby intimating two things; (1.) How great need and exercise there is of patience, in maintaining Unity among the Saints: They must bear one another's burthens; they must give allowance for mutual infirmities: For the Church here is not an Assembly of Spirits of just Men made perfect. The Unity of the Saints therefore greatly depends upon the exercise of *Patience* one towards another; and this he begs the *God of Patience* to give them. And to endear this Grace of Patience to them, He (2.) joyns with it another Title of God, *viz. the God of Consolation*, wherein he points them to that abundant comfort which would result unto themselves from such a blessed Unity continued and maintained by the mutual exercises of patience and forbearance one towards another. And to set home all, he lays before them the pattern and example of Christ; *The God of patience and consolation grant you to be like minded according to Christ.* How many Thousand

land infirmities and failures in Duty, doth Christ find in all his people? Notwithstanding which, he maintaineth Union and Communion with them; and if they, after his example, shall do so likewise with one another, God will be eminently glorified therein. This will evidence both the Truth and Excellency of the Christian Religion, which so firmly knits the hearts of its Professors together.

(2.) *Secondly*, The necessity and desirableness of this Unity farther appears, by the deep interest that the comfort and benefit of our Souls have in it. A great example hereof we have in *Acts* 2. 46, 47. Oh! what cheeriness, strength, and pleasure, did the Primitive Christians reap from the Unity of their Hearts in the ways and worship of God? Next unto the pleasure and delight of immediate Communion with God himself, and the shedding abroad of his Love into our Hearts by the Holy-Ghost; none like that which ariseth from the harmonious exercises of the graces of the Saints in their mutual Duties and Communions one with another. How are their Spirits dilated and refreshed by it? What

a lively emblem is here of Heaven ! the Courts of Princes afford no such delights. Whereas on the other side, when Schisms have rent Churches a-sunder , they go away from each other exasperated, grieved and wounded, crying out, Oh, that I had a Cottage in the Wilderness ! or, oh ! that I had the Wings of a Dove, that I might flee away, and be at rest.

(3.) *Lastly*, The necessity and desirableness of this Union further appears with respect unto the World, who are allured to Christ by it, and scared off from Religion by the feuds and divisions of Professors. To this the Prayer of Christ hath respect, *Joh. 17. 23. That they may be made perfect in one, that the world may know that thou hast sent me. q. d.* This, O Father, will be a convincing evidence to the World, of the Divinity both of my Person and Doctrine, and a great ordinance for their conversion to me, when they shall see my people cleaving inseparably unto me by Faith, and to one another by Love. And on the other side, it will be a fatal stumbling-block in the way of their conversion, to observe my followers biting and devouring, rending and tearing one another.

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A Learned and Judicious Divine Com-  
menting upon those words, *Cant. 2. 7.* Mr. John  
Cotton.

*I charge you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, by the Roes, and by the Hinds of the field, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love till he please;* gives the sense thus; By Roes and Hinds of the Field (saith he) understand weak comers on towards Christ, persons under some preparatory works towards Conversion, who are as shy and as timorous as *Roes* and *Hinds* of the Field; and as they will be scared by the yelp of a Dog, or sound of a Gun; so will these at any offensive miscarriages in the Churches of Christ.

*Alexander Severus*, finding two Christians contending with one another, commanded them that they should not presume to take the name of Christ upon them any longer; for (saith he) you greatly dishonour your Master, whose Disciples you profess your selves to be. And thus briefly of the nature of Church-unity, and the necessity and desirableness thereof among all that stand in that Relation.

U S E.

The only improvement I shall make of this point, shall be for,

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I. Ex-

*A Sermon on Gospel-Unity.*

1. Exhortation to Unity.
2. Directions for the maintaining of it.

Use 1. *The first Use for Exhortation.*

And first, having briefly discoursed the nature, necessity and desireableness of Unity among all Christians, and especially of those in particular Church-relation, I do in the Bowels of Christ, and in the words of his Apostle, *Phil. 2. 1, 2.* earnestly and humbly intreat all my Brethren, *That if there be any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the spirit, if any bowels of mercies, fulfil ye my joy; that ye be like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* He speaketh not as one doubting; but as one disputing, when he saith, *If there be any consolation in Christ:* And 'tis as if he had said, I passionately and earnestly intreat you by all that comfort and joy you have found in your mutual Communion from Christ, and his Ordinances, wherein you have comfortably walked together, by all that comfort resulting from the mutual exercises, and fruits of Christian Love; by the unspeakable joys and delights the Spirit of God hath shed down

down upon you, whilst you walked in Unity, in the ways of your Duty; by all the bowels of compassion and mercy you have for your selves, for your Brethren, or for the poor carnal World, who are in hazard of being destroyed by your divisions: Or for me, your Minister, whose joy and comfort is bound up in your unity and stability; *That ye be like minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.* What heart that hath one spark of the Love of Christ in it, yields not to such an Exhortation as this, enforced by *the consolation of Christ, comfort of Love, fellowship of the Spirit, and Bowels of Mercy?* More particularly, suffer ye this word of Exhortation from the consideration of the following Arguments or Motives, what distances soever you are at from one another.

*Motive I.*

Reflect upon the late long and continued troubles you have been under, as the just rebukes of God for your former contentions and follies.

I need not tell you, you are but lately pluck'd as brands out of the burning, and that the smell of Fire is yet upon you.



you. The time lately was, when you gat your Bread with the peril of your lives ; when God handed it to you behind your Enemies backs ; when your eyes did not , could not behold your former Teachers, except in Corners or Prisons, when your Souls were sorrowful for the solemn Assemblies ; when you mournfully confessed before the Lord, that these were the just and deserved punishments for your wantonness, barrenness, and provoking animosities. These things were not only the matter of your humble confessions ; but the reformation of those evils was what you solemnly promised the Lord, when he should again restore you to your liberty. What ! And is the Rod no sooner off your backs, but you will to the old work again ? Read *Ezra 9. 6, 7, 8, 9, 10.* and view the face of this Sin in that glass. Have we been so many years in the furnace, and our dross not purged ? Such sharp and long-continued afflictions produce no better effects ? It may be said of our troubles, as of the Siege of *Tyrus*, *Ezek. 29. 18. Every head was made bald, and every shoulder peeled.* Some of us went young Men into persecution and trouble, and are come forth old ; and which is worst

worst of all, we bring our old corruptions forth with us. Either we did confess and bewail these sins in the days of our affliction, or we did not. If we did not, we were incorrigible, and defeated the design of the Rod. If we did, our Confessions and Sorrow were either sincere or hypocritical: If sincere, certainly they would effectually caution us, that we return not again to folly, *Ezra 9. 13, 14.* *After all that is come upon us for our evil deeds, and for our great trespass, seeing that thou, our God, hast punished us less than our iniquities deserve; and hast given us such a deliverance as this; Should we again break thy Commandment?*

*Motive II.*

Consider the common imminent danger that now threatens us, both from Enemies upon our Borders, and within our own Bowels. The *Canaanites* are in the Land, let there be no strife therefore betwixt Brethren; our natural, civil, and spiritual comforts are all shaking and trembling about us. If wanton Children fall out and quarrel at a full Table, our Enemies stand ready to take away the Cloth. They are not so far from us, and out of sight, but God can call

call them in a few hours to end the strife amongst us. We act not only beneath the Rules of Religion, but of Reason also. Brute creatures will depose their very Antipathies in a common danger. Mr. *Tho. Fuller*, in his *History of the Worthies of England*, tells us, That when the *Severn-Sea* overflowed the lower Grounds of *Somersetshire*, it was observed that Dogs and Hares, and Cats and Rats, swimming to the Burroughs and Hills to preserve their lives, stood quiet during the Flood; not offering the least injury one to another. 'Tis pity that sense should do more with Beasts, than Reason and Religion with Men.

### *Motive III.*

Reflect upon the scandal your divisions give to the World; how it hardens and prejudices them against Religion and Reformation. And thus the Souls of Men are eternally hazarded by the follies of Professors: They are ready enough to take occasions against Religion, where none are given, and much more to improve them where occasions are given. *Wo unto the world* (saith Christ) *because of offences: for it must needs be that offences come; but wo to that*  
man

*man by whom the offence cometh, Matt. 18.*

7. The wo is not only denounced against the taker, but the giver of the offence. It fixes such prejudices in the hearts of carnal Men, that some of them will never have good thoughts of Religion any more; but utterly distast and nauseate those Assemblies and Ordinances from which their Conversion may with greatest probability be expected.

How long and how anxiously have we prayed, and waited for such a day of Gospel-liberty as we now enjoy? It hath been one of the sorest afflictions we have graped with in the days of our restraint, that we could not speak unto the carnal World. If we had opportunity to speak at all, it was for the most part to such as stood in need of Edification more than of Conversion. God hath now, beyond thoughts of most hearts, opened to us a door of Liberty to Preach, and for all that will, to hear. Some fruits we have already seen, and more we expect. The Children are as it were coming to the birth, and will you obstruct it? Will you give the Gospel a miscarrying-womb? Be instruments at once, by your contentions, to destroy the Souls of Men, and break the very hearts of your Ministers,

sters, whose greatest comfort is bound up in the success of their Labours? Brethren, I beseech you read these words as if they were delivered to you upon my bended knees; I beseech you for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the hopes sake of saving the precious immortal Souls of Men; and for your poor Ministers sake, who have scarce any thing besides the fruits of their Labours, to recompence their long-continued and grievous sufferings, depose your animosities, maintain the unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace; help us, but don't hinder us in our hard labours. What good will our Lives do us, if we must labour in vain, and spend our strength for nought? We find it difficult enough to persuade sinners to come unto Christ, when no such stumbling-blocks are laid in the way; the counter-pleas of Satan, the unbelief and sensualities of unsanctified nature, are difficulties too great for us to grapple with; but if to these must be added prejudices against Religion, from your dividing Lusts, and scandalous Breaches, what hope then remains? If you have no pity for your selves, pity perishing Souls, and pity your poor discouraged Ministers; have a care you  
make

make us not to groan to God against you; or if that be a small thing in your eyes, have a care lest the Blood of Souls be charged to your account in the great day. Are there none in the Towns or Neighbourhoods where you live? Are you sure there are none that have hopeful inclinations towards Religion? desires and purposes to attend on the same means of Grace you sit under, who will charge the occasion of their Damnation upon you at the Bar of Christ, and say, Lord, we had some weak convictions upon our Consciences, that we needed a rousing and searching Minister; we were convinced that the profane and carnal World, among whom we had our conversation, were not in the right path that leadeth to Salvation. We felt in our selves inclinations to cast off our old Companions, and associate with those that professed more strictness and holiness, and place our selves under the most fruitful and advantagious Ministry, and accordingly improved opportunities to get acquaintance with them; but when we came nearer to them, we found such wrath and envy, such wranglings and divisions, such undermining and supplanting each others reputation; such  
whisper-

whisperings and tale-bearings, such malicious aggravations and improvements of common failings and infirmities, such covetousness and worldliness, such pride and vanity, as gave us such a disgust and offence at the ways of Reformation, that we could never more be reconciled to them. Beware, I say, how you incur the guilt of such a dreadful charge as this, by giving liberty to such Lusts and Passions under a profession of Religion, and pretence to Reformation.

*Motive IV.*

Consider the contrariety of such Practices to that solemn and fervent Prayer of Jesus Christ, recorded in *John 17*. 'Tis highly remarkable, how in that Prayer, which he poured out a little before his death with such a mighty *Pathos*, and fervency of Spirit, he insists upon nothing more than Unity among his People. He returns upon his Father again and again, for the obtaining of this one thing: Four times doth he beg for Unity among them, and every time he seems to rise higher and higher, beseeching his Father, (1.) That they may be one. (2.) That they may be one in us. (3.) That they may be one as thou and I are one. and lastly, That they may be made per-

perfect in one; By all this shewing how intent his Spirit was upon this one thing.

Brethren, If you would study how to frustrate the design, and grieve the Heart of your Lord Jesus Christ (to whom you profess love and obedience) you cannot take a readier way to do it, than by breaking the bonds of Unity among your selves. I beseech you therefore in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath so earnestly prayed for the unity of his People, *That ye be perfectly joined together in one heart, and in one mind*, as the Text speaks.

Motive V.

Consider how directly your Divisions cross and frustrate the Design and End of Church-fellowship which is instituted for the improvement of each other's Graces, and helping on the mortification of each other's Corruptions.

God hath distributed variety of gifts and graces in different degrees amongst his People; the improvement of these gifts and graces to the glory of God, and our mutual edification, is the very scope and end of particular Church-fellowship



Torshell's  
help to  
Christian-  
fellowship  
p. 6, 7.

lowship and Communion : every man hath his proper gift of God, and (as a late Worthy notes) the gifts and graces of all, are this way made useful and beneficial. *Job* was exemplary for plainness and patience : *Moses* for faithfulness and meekness : *Josiah* for tenderness, and a melting Spirit : *Athanasius* was prudent and active : *Basil* heavenly, and of a sweet Spirit : *Chrysostom* laborious, and without affectation : *Ambrose* resolved and grave. One hath quickness of parts ; but not so solid a Judgment : Another is solid , but not ready and presential. One hath a good Wit, another a better Memory, a third excells them both in utterance. One is zealous, but ungrounded ; another well principled, but timorous. One is wary and prudent ; another open and plain-hearted. One is trembling and melting ; another chearful, and full of comfort. Now the end and use of Church-fellowship is to make a rich improvement unto all by a regular use and exercise of the gifts and graces found in every one. One must impart his light, and another his warmth. The Eye (*viz.* the knowing man) cannot say to the hand (*viz.* the active man) I have no need of thee. Unspeakable are the benefits resulting

ting from spiritual and orderly Communion; but whatever the benefits be, they are all cut off by Schisms and Dissentions; for as Faith is the grace, by which we receive all from God; so Love is the grace by which we share and divide the comfort of all among our selves. The excellent things of the Spirit are lodg'd in earthen Vessels, which death will shortly break, and then we can have no more benefit by them; but these Jars and Divisions render Saints, as it were, dead one to another, whilst they are alive. Ah how lovely, how sweet and desirable it is to live in the communion of such Saints as are described! *Mal. 3. 16.* To hear them freely, and humbly to open their hearts and experiences to one another! After this manner, some say, the art of Medicine was found out: As any one met with an Herb, and discovered the virtue of it by any Accident, he was to post it up, and so the Physicians skill was perfected by a collection of those posted Experiments. But wo to us! we are ready to post up each other's Failings and Infirmities to the shame and reproach of Religion, and to furnish our common Enemies with matter of contempt and scorn against us all.

## Motive VI.

In a word, These Schisms and Dissensions in the Churches of Christ are ominous presages, and foreboding signs of some sweeping Judgment, and common Calamity near approaching us. 'Tis a common observation with Shepherds, That when the Sheep push one another, a storm speedily ensues. I am sure 'tis so here, if God turn not our hearts one towards another, he will come and smite the Earth with a Curse, *Mal.* 4. 6. I believe it, Sirs, you will have other work to do shortly. There be those coming, (if God prevent not) that will part the fray.

## USE II. for Direction.

Use 2. In the last place therefore give me leave to lay before you some necessary and proper Directions and Counsels for the prevention and healing of Schisms and Divisions amongst the Churches of Christ: for it is not Complaints and Lamentations, but proper Counsels and Directions; and those not only prescribed, but obeyed, that must do the work. When *Joshua* lay upon his face before the Lord, *Joshua* 7. 8, 9, 10. bewailing  
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the sins and miseries of *Israel*; Up (saith God) *sanctify the people; wherefore liest thou upon thy face?* As if he should say, Thy moans and lamentations are good and necessary in their place; but speedy action and vigorous endeavours must be also used, or *Israel* will perish. So say I, up, up, fall speedily to your duties as men in earnest; and for your guidance in the paths of duty, I will lay before you the following plain and necessary Directions.

*Direction I.*

The orderly gathering, and filling of particular Churches, is of great influence unto the peace and tranquillity of those Churches: and therefore it greatly concerns all that are interested therein, especially such as are vested with Office-power to beware whom they receive into their Communion.

The Scriptures do plainly discover to us, that Church-members ought to be visible Saints, 1 *Cor.* 1. 2. 2 *Cor.* 1. 1, 2. *Acts* 2. 41, to the end. *Ephes.* 2. 7. 1 *Thes.* 1. 2, 3. *Rom.* 1. 7. *Col.* 1. 2. Hence particular Churches are called the Churches of the Saints, 1 *Cor.* 14. 33. If admissions belax and negligent, so much hete-

rogeneous matter fills the Church, that it can never be quiet. Christians and Christians may live together harmoniously and coalesce in one orderly and comfortable Society, as having one and the same Head, one Spirit, the same general Design and End; but godly and ungodly, spiritual and carnal are acted by contrary Principles, pursue opposite Designs, and can never heartily coalesce. There is a spirit of discerning, a judgment of discretion in the Saints, and it is especially desirable in a more eminent degree in those that have Office-power in the Church, to judge of mens fit qualifications for Church-communion. We all allow, that gross ignorance and prophane-ness are just bars to mens admission: and to deny this, were to take all power from the Church to preserve the purity of God's Ordinances, or to cast out notorious Offenders. None ought to be admitted into Church-communion, but such as do appear to the judgment of Charity (comparing their Professions and Conversations) to be Christians indeed, that is, men fearing God, and working Righteousness.

And I make no doubt, but some Opinions as well as practices, render men  
unmeet

unmeet for Church-communion, *Tit.* 3. 10. 2 *John* 10. All Opinions which overthrow Doctrines necessary to be believed, which the Apostle comprehends under the name of Faith; and all such Opinions as are inconsistent with an holy Life, and overthrow the power of Godliness, which the Apostle comprehends under the name of a good Conscience, 1 *Tim.* 1. 19, 20. whosoever shall hold or maintain any such Opinions as these, he is either to be kept out, if not admitted; or cast out, if he be in Church-fellowship. In receiving such, you receive but Spies and Incendiaries among you. What a Fire-brand did *Arius* prove, not only in the Church of *Constantinople*, but even to the whole World? Men of graceless Hearts, and erroneous Heads, will give a continual exercise to the patience of Sober Christians. I deny not but out of the purest Churches men may arise speaking perverse things; and yet the Officers and Members of those Churches be blameless in their admission: But if they can be discerned before they be admitted, a little preventive care would be of singular and seasonable use to the tranquillity of Church-Societies.

## Direction II.

Let all Officers and Members of Church study their Duties, and keep themselves within the bounds of their proper places. Ordinate Motions are quiet Motions, 1 *Thef.* 4. 11. *Study to be quiet, and do your own business, and work with your own hands, as we commanded you.* In which words he condemns two vices, which disturb and distract the Churches of Christ, *viz.* Curiosity in matters which pertain not to us, and Idleness in the Duties of our particular Callings. Two things I will drop by way of Caution:

A Doctore  
glorioso, à  
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Prayer.

(1.) Let it be for Caution to Ministers that they mind their proper work, study the Peace of the Church, impartially dispense their respects to the Saints committed to their charge, not siding with a Party. There be few Schisms in Churches, in which Ministers have not some hand. *Jerome* upon those words, *Hosea* 9. 8. hath this memorable note; *Veteres scrutans historias, invenire non possum scidisse Ecclesiam, prater eos qui Sacerdotes a Deo positi fuerunt.* Searching the Ancient Histories (saith he) I can find none that hath more rent the Church of

of God, than those that sustain the Office of Ministers. This is a sad charge, and 'tis too justly laid upon many of that Order : Oh what a Blessing is a Prudent, Patient, Peaceable Minister, to the Flock over which he watches!

(2.) Let the People keep their places, and study their proper Duties. There be in most Congregations, some idle people, who having little to do at home, are employed upon *Satan's* Errands to run from house to house, carrying tales to exasperate one Christian against another. These the Apostle particularly marks, and warns the Churches of, *1 Tim. 5. 13. And withal they learn to be idle, wandring about from house to house; and not only idle, but tatlers also, and busie-bodies, speaking things which they ought not.* If that one rule of Christ, *Matth. 18. 15, 16.* were conscientiously and strictly attended to, to tell a trespassing Brother his fault privately, then with one or two more, if obstinacy make it necessary, and not to expose him to the whole Church, and much less to the whole World, without a plain necessity, How many thousand Ruptures would be prevented in Christian Societies? But instead of regularly admonishing and reproving those  
irregular



irregular and idle Tatlers (as the Apostle calls them) who make it their business to sow jealousies, to make and widen breaches amongst brethren.

### *Direction III.*

Let all Christians govern their tongues and keep them under the command of the law of kindness in their mutual converses with one another. *A soft answer* (saith Solomon) *Prov. 15. 1. turneth away wrath; but grievous words stir up anger*: Hard to hard will never do well: How easily did *Abigail* disarm angry *David* by a gentle Apology? What more boisterous than the wind? Yet a gentle Rain will allay it. It may be strongly presumed that a meek and gentle answer will more easily allay the Passions of a godly man than of one that is both ungodly and full of Enmity towards us; and yet sometimes it hath done the latter. A company of vain wicked men having inflamed their Blood in a Tavern at *Boston* in *New-England*, and seeing that Reverend, Meek, and Holy Minister of Christ, *Mr. Cotton* coming along the street, one of them tells his companions, *Ple go* (saith he) *and put a trick upon the old Cotton*; down he goes, and crossing his

his way, whispers these words into his ear, *Cotton* (said he) *thou art an old fool*: *Mr. Cotton* replied, *I confess I am so; the Lord make both me and thee wiser than we are, even wise to salvation*: He relates this passage to his wicked companions, which cast a great damp upon their spirits in the midst of a frolick: What peaceful Societies should we have, if our lips transgressed not the laws of love and kindness?

*Direction IV.*

Respectful Deportments to those that are beneath us in Gifts or Estates, is an excellent conservative of Church-Peace. Lofly and Contemtuious carriages towards those that are beneath us in either respect, is a frequent occasion of bitter Jars and Animosities. The Apostle chargeth it upon the *Corinthians*, *That no one be puffed up for one against another; for who maketh thee to differ from another?* 1 Cor. 4. 6, 7. What respectful language did Holy Mr. *Brewer* give to his own godly servants? Remember, Christians, that there is neither rich nor poor, bond nor free, but all are one in Christ Jesus. This indeed destroys not the civil differences God hath made between one and another.

ther. Grace will teach the godly servant to give double honour to a Religious Master or Mistress, the private Christian to a godly Magistrate or Minister. It will teach the People to know them which labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake, and to be at peace among themselves, *1 Thes. 5. 12, 13.* and it will also teach Superiors to condescend to men of low degree, and not to think of themselves above what they ought, but *with all lowliness, meekness and long suffering to forbear one another in love, keeping (this way) the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace, Eph. 4. 2, 3.*

*Direction. V.*

This gentle language and respectful deportment, would naturally and constantly flow from the Uniting Grace of Wisdom, Humility and Love, were they more exalted in the hearts of Christians.

Wisdom would allay those unchristian heats, *Prov. 17. 27.* a man of understanding is of an excellent Spirit, so we render it, but the Hebrew signifies a cool Spirit; *the wisdom that is from above is gentle and easie to be intreated, James 3. 17.*

Humi-

Humility takes away the fewel from the fire of Contention; only from Pride cometh Contention, *Prov.* 13. 10. How dearly hath Pride, especially Spiritual Pride cost the Churches of Christ?

Love is the very Cement of Societies, the fountain of Peace and Unity; it thinketh no evil, *1 Cor.* 13. puts the fairest fence upon doubtful words and actions, it beareth all things. Love me (saith *Anst.*) and reprove me as thou pleasest: 'Tis a radical grace, bearing the fruits of Peace and Unity upon it.

*Direction VI.*

Be of a Christ-like, forgiving Spirit one towards another, *Eph.* 4. 31, 32. *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.* Hath thy Brother offended thee? how apt art thou also to offend thy Brother? and which is infinitely more, how often dost thou every day grieve and offend Jesus Christ, who yet freely forgives all thy offences? Remember Friend, that an unforgiving is a sad sign of an unforgiven person. They that have found mercy,  
pity

*A Sermon on Gospel-Unity.*

pity and forgiveness should of all men in the World be most ready to shew it.

*Direction VII.*

Be deeply affected with the mischievous effects and consequents of Schisms and Divisions in the Societies of the Saints, and let nothing beneath a plain necessity divide you from Communion one with another; hold it fast till you can hold it no longer without Sin. At the fire of your contentions your enemies warm their hands, and say, aha, so would we have it: Your Prayers are obstructed, *Mat. 5. 24. First be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift.* Edification is hindred: Feaverish bodies thrive not, *Eph. 4. 15. God is provoked to remove his Gracious presence from among you.* Be of one mind (saith the Apostle) *live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you, 1 Cor. 13. 11.* implying that their contentions would deprive them of his blessed company with them. The glory of your society is clouded; *if ye have bitter envyings and strife in your hearts, glory not, James 3. 14.* Glory not in your Church Privileges, personal gifts and attainments; whatever you think of your selves you are

*A Sermon on Gospel-Unity.*

are not such Christians as you vogue your selves for, living in a Sin so directly contrary to Christianity. The name of Christ is dishonoured. You are taken out of the world, to be a people for his name, that is, for his honour ; but there's little credit to the name of Christ from a dividing, wrangling people. The alluring beauty of Christianity , by which the Church gains upon the world, *Acts* 2. 46, 47. is sullied and defaced, and thereby ( as I noted before ) conversion hindered, and a new stone, as it were, rolled over the graves of poor sinners, to keep them down in their impenitency : Tremble therefore at the thoughts of Divisions and Separations. St. *Augustine* notes three sins severely punished in Scripture. The Golden, Calf with the Sword ; *Jehojakims* cutting the Sacred Roll , with a dreadful Captivity ; but the Schism of *Korah* and his Accomplices, with the Earth's opening her mouth and swallowing them up quick.

*Direction VIII.*

Let all Church-Members see that they have Union with Christ, evidencing it self in daily sweet Communion with him. Lines drawn from a Circumference come  
nearest

nearest to one another in the Centre. When God intends to make the hearts of men one, he first makes them new, *Ezek. 11. 19. I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you.* And the more any renewed heart tastes the sweetness of Communion with God, by so much it is disposed for Unity and Peace with his People. Our frowardness and peevishness plainly discovers all is not well betwixt God and us. Nothing so opposite to, or abhorred by a soul that enjoys sweet Peace and Communion with Christ, than to live in sinful jars and contentions with his people. Return therefore to the Primitive Spirit of Love and Unity; forbear one another; forgive one another; mortifie your dividing Lusts; cherish your Uniting Graces; *mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine ye have learned, and avoid them, Rom. 16. 17.* In a Word, and that the Word of the Apostle in the Text, *I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment.*

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